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10TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE 1974-84

Joey Ramone

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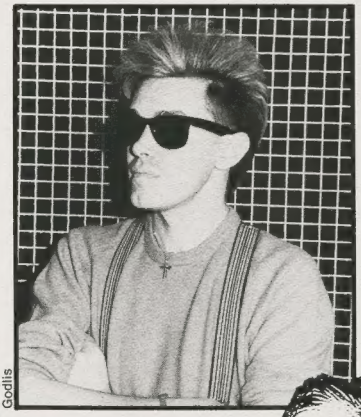
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hello it's me

BLACKBOARD JUNGLE

Brian Setzer (TP 94) says TP likes anything from England and writes nothing about American bands. He's "tired about reading about shitheads on the Pinhead label from England." Well, maybe, Brian, UK bands are more suitable for changing American tastes than bands with nothing more to say than "I don't want to go to school no more."

Also, Ed. was right. How many English bands in the February issue, Brian? And what was American BRIAN SETZER doing on the cover? Not all American bands suck, but by no means should UK bands be swept under the rug either.

Judey Page
Woodside, NY

I'm gonna have to agree with Brian Setzer about the likes of Big Country, those slime-faced foreigners who keep trying to infest the charts, skeeve American bucks, and then laugh about how stupid we're supposed to be. Well, I've hated 'em ever since they crawled on MTV. I mean, next thing you know they'll be wantin' to marry our women!!!

Stacey Allison-Brill
Newtown, CT

PISH TOSH

Recently picked up the year-end issue to encounter an article with the dubious title of "Tough Tosh" (TP 92/93), Peter running at the mouth in a manner that ill becomes someone who professes to seek a reformation of the Wailers. (Whether or not such a thing is possible is best questioned or decried, at least in light of his remarks about Bob Marley.) Since I wrote a book about Bob and enjoyed a long and cordial relationship with him, my prejudices are obvious—as obvious as the ass Peter made out of himself by pissing on his cohort's grave.

Another problem I had with the piece was that the writer seemed so intimidated by Tosh's astonishingly arrogant cant about being Bob Marley's "teacher" that he attempted to fashion that reaction into some sort of a slant that esteemed Peter's blather. The notion that Peter was Bob's teacher would not stand up to the scrutiny of either Seymour Hersh or a Grade A Fancy nitwit—whether a Marley fan or not.

I was heartened to see the British music press trash Tosh from here to 1985 for his callous, lamebrained dismissal of Bob Marley's life and work. And I was pleased that *Trouser Press* gave Tosh the opportunity to display his petty-minded self-importance. Years ago at the Peace Concert in Kingston, when Tosh had the courage to speak his mind about wanting not peace but equal rights, I admired his moxie. His latest speech leaves me sickened. If he can't regroup the surviving Wailers with a sense of joy and a generosity of spirit for what went before, he ought to leave the project alone. Otherwise it's a monument only to his toweringly venal ego, not to mention a smarmy exercise in grave-robbing.

Timothy White
New York, NY

THE ED. GIVETH . . .

I just bought TP 94 and all I have to say is yow! Finally you have printed something worthwhile! Gee—the Cramps, X, Stray Cats and hardcore in one issue!! I hope this is going to be a trend for '84 and beyond! Now how about an article on the Bangles?

PS. Can I have a neat little "Ed." response under my letter too?

Jill Zimba
Dearborn Hts., MI

No.—Ed.

DURAN: THE LAST STRAW

It was with great pleasure that I opened your December/January issue to find letters castigating you for being too much like *Tiger Beat*.

I have news for you: You could do worse. Along with *Rock!*, our new music publication, we have nearly two million attentive readers, who would certainly take offense at being called "mindless teens," as Ronnie Walker described them. Wouldn't Walker have balked at the title at that age?

Personally, it annoys me to be described as "totally wasteful," especially when I break my ass to give my readers what they want. That so many people connect us with Duran Duran indicates that we're doing a pretty good job of reaching them.

Nancie Martin
Tiger Beat/Rock!
Cresskill, NJ

BOWIE UNDER THE SURFACE

When TP comes out I usually read *Surface Noise* first, and always gain from it. The column on David Bowie (TP 92/93) is no exception.

Mick Farren made some (sadly enough) valid points. This article may not have been his very best, but it certainly was one of his most thought-provoking.

Pam Wolf
Hillcrest, CA

raving faves

RF #70: Solo Albums by Band Members

The catch here was that the solo albums had to be recorded by current members while the parent band was still active. So no **Sid [Vicious] Sings**, although Pete Shelley's **Homosapien** slips through a loophole, since it was started during the Buzzcocks' lifetime. (A diligent Eric Hansmann spotted this.)

Faithful Who fans put Pete Townshend way out in front for **Empty Glass**, placed **Chinese Eyes** on the winners' list, and lobbied for two other Townshend albums as well. There was also a vote here and there for Roger Daltrey and John Entwistle records. The latter's **Too Late the Hero** was one of K. Crother's choices: "It keeps Joe Walsh busy, and thus keeps the Eagles out of business, thank goodness."

Talking Heads are the only other group represented more than once below. A third Heads spin-off, **The Tom Tom Club**, was just below the cut-off point—as were Bryan Ferry's **These Foolish Things** and Rod Stewart's **Every Picture Tells a Story**, the two oldest albums in the running.

Michael Jackson *was* eligible, but few took advantage to nominate **Thriller, Off the Wall** or even **Ben** (!). Anyone care to switch votes?

1. **Empty Glass**, Pete Townshend (Who)
2. **The Catherine Wheel**, David Byrne (Talking Heads)
3. **The Lone Rhino**, Adrian Belew (King Crimson)
4. **Face Value**, Phil Collins (Genesis)
   All the Best Cowboys Have Chinese Eyes, Pete Townshend
6. **Dave Gilmour** (Pink Floyd)
   The Red and the Black, Jerry Harrison (Talking Heads)
   Klark Kent, a pseudonymous Stewart Copeland (Police)
   It's a Wonderful Life, Chris Stamey (dB's)

Question #73

The most embarrassing moment you've ever had, related in any way to music. No need to sign entries for this one. Deadline is April 13, 1984.

Arthur Levy, Bruce Harris, Gregg Geller, Tom French, Ida Langsam, Janis Schacht, Ben Richardson, Tom Silvestri,

I have been a faithful Bowiephile since the eighth grade, but I am not a blind fool. I realize Bowie is easily the biggest poseur in rock, which is what makes him so damn interesting.

What Mick Farren overlooked is that we enjoy Bowie's pretensions. He's been black, female and an alien, and made some great music every step of the way. Farren is right: Bowie's moves are silly and transparent. He's not a living, breathing person, he's a character. When Elvis Costello does country, soul, rock or whatever, he's always Elvis Costello; Bowie gets a new haircut, wardrobe, voice, facial structure and persona. It's fun, see? Fun.

Kurt Gottschalk
Springfield, IL

NO ROOM AT THE INN

It is nice to see Richmond, Virginia getting the overdue national attention it deserves (*America Underground*, TP 92/93). But there was an incorrect item concerning our band, Surrender Dorothy.

Surrender Dorothy has never considered playing Holiday Inns anywhere, let alone Holland. The band has considered playing Europe, but the Holiday Inn snipe was given to writer Jeff Lindholm by a former band member. Although Surrender Dorothy appreciates the attention, we would like to speak for ourselves. The band is hard at work in the studio and rehearsing for upcoming gigs. There are no hotels in the future of Surrender Dorothy.

Lyn Harrell
Surrender Dorothy
Richmond, VA

VIDEO, VIDEO

I read *Media Eye* (TP 92/93) with great interest. I think MTV has done more harm than good. Ask anyone under 18 (I'm in high school myself) what they think of a group. Chances are they'll never have heard of them if they didn't make a video, or they'll judge them by their visual image. Never mind the quality of the actual song.

What the hell happened to the new music scene, anyway? Five years ago I used to listen to nobodies like Talking Heads, the Police and Devo. Thanks to video, "new music" now consists of pretty boys with flashy clothes and synthesizers who make music of no substance. Only a few bands (REM, Shoes, Aztec Camera) have kept their integrity.

If I sound bitter, it's because I, like many others, feel cheated. MTV was supposed to bring to the fore music that deserved to be heard. All it's done is push hard-working, quality bands further underground.

Michael Appelstein
Spotswood, NJ

You're wrong about MTV's intentions. Grow up.—Ed.

JUST SUPPOSIN'

Just read another letter in your magazine where somebody makes the assertion "rock is not supposed to be . . ." etc., etc.

I can't understand where people get the idea that rock is or isn't supposed to be anything; it's whatever people make of it. To some people melody counts, to others there must be deep lyrics. Some people demand polished production. A person can value "God Save the Queen" as a political statement one day, and as good dance music the next.

This fixation on what rock is supposed to be is a hypothetical question posed by reviewers to have something to write about. It's hard to write critically about music if entertainment value is the sole criterion, so other elements—social relevance, uniqueness, virtuosity—are injected into the equation. These are now fairly well accepted ways to judge a record, but they certainly don't have to be.

Critics, of course, are a little lost with new wave dance bands; it's hard to write a lengthy treatise on something whose main attribute is that it's got a good beat and you can dance to it. That's why in periods like the present the music press moans how there's nothing good out. It's not that there's nothing good to listen to, there's just nothing good to write about. If you got paid for writing about rock, you'd moan too!

Steve Gardner
San Diego, CA

Ebet Roberts, Dave Fricke, Louise Greif, Judy Steccone, Ray Goydon, Pete Frame.

HEAVY BUSINESS

CYNDI LAUPER. "SHE'S SO UNUSUAL."
Unusual isn't the word to describe the former lead singer of Blue Angel, who's currently catching the fancy of a nation with her hit song, "Girls Just Want To Have Fun," the video of which (featuring wrestling great Captain Lou Albano) is an MTV™ smash. Just one standout from her debut album which also includes her cover of The Brains' perfect "Money Changes Everything" and Prince's "When You Were Mine."

BILL NELSON. "VISTAMIX."
The first U.S. album in years from the perennial anglophile favorite (and founder of seminal group, Bebop Deluxe), "Vistamix" is culled from master guitarist/singer/composer Nelson's most recent British output.

THE THE. "SOUL MINING."
Finally, the domestic debut of the U.K.'s soulful solo star Matt Johnson, who writes, sings and plays all the parts of The The. Includes the club smash, "Uncertain Smile," and other songs certain to rouse the most jaded listener.

NENA. "99 LUFTBALLONS."
Out imminently, an entire new album from the first German/English crossover pop band currently floating on the success of their huge club hit, "99 Luftballons." Fronted by the luscious vocalist, Nena, this group deserves much wider exposure in '84.

FREUR. "DOOT-DOOT."
This is the first domestic release of the English post-psychedelic Freur, an enigmatic ensemble who scored in Europe last year with their single, "Doot-Doot." That's on the album, along with the Francois Kevorkian remix of their newest U.K. single, "Riders In The Night."

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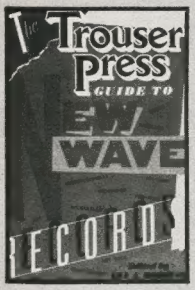

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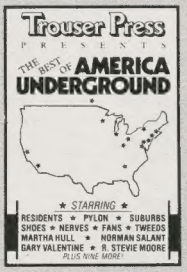

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REAL LIFE

I read with great amusement the *Hot Spots* review of the Rock Against Reagan concert last summer featuring the Dead Kennedys (TP 91). It has inspired me to write about my New Year's Eve experience in case anyone would want to know what spending New Year's Eve in Wausau, Wisconsin is like.

I was supposed to spend New Year's Eve with my friend Geri. We were going to go to a bar and hear the band Tango play Top 40 and dance to them. Geri said some of her relatives were going to come: Rita and Myron had a car and could give us a ride since the bar was about 11 miles east of town.

They came and picked me up in a silver car and the song "Let's Dance" by David Bowie was on the radio. Everybody was all dressed up. I crawled in the back and Geri leaned over and said quietly, "We can't smoke dope in their car. Rita will throw a fit." "Okay," I smiled.

Then I noticed Myron was not even going east. He was going west. I politely said, "Where are you taking me?" "To the 3rd Street Pub," he said, annoyed that I would even ask. "We're going to pick up Denise and Steve and June and Nick."

We pulled into the parking lot and it was bitter cold. There were bumper stickers that said stuff like "If this van's a rocking don't come a knocking" and "Beer drinkers get more head."

We walked into the back door and some people in pantsuits and shiny shoes yelled, "Rita, Myron, oh my god!" and they all hugged. Nick was playing Pac Man and acted like he was going to punch the screen because he lost. He was swearing and June was comforting him. Denise was chewing gum, smoking a cigarette and sipping on a brandy sweet. She said, "Oh god. We've been waiting and waiting. Did Myron tell you what happened to Steve at work? Who's babysitting?"

Geri and I went over to check out the jukebox. You can tell a lot about a bar by its jukebox. They had one-fourth country and western, one-fourth heavy metal, one-fourth new wave and one-fourth Top 40. We played "In a Big Country" and Rita howled, "Oh god. I can't stand this song. This guy from work has this tape and plays it over and over." Each time she said "over" her dice earring hit her neck like little foam dice on a rear-view mirror.

After a long while they decided it was time to go and hear Tango. I was relieved. Rita turned to Geri and me and said that Geri better had wore a bra this time because if she was going to wiggle all over the dance floor again Rita would not dance with us. Geri just laughed and I decided Rita was a clod and I'd ride to the bar with June and Nick instead.

On the way June commented on how Nick doesn't have a job and they got into a fight. We arrived at the bar and the parking lot was totally packed. Nick said, "Oh shit. It'll be packed in there. Let's just go to the Down the Hill Bar." June said she didn't care what he did. I said I'd go inside and scout it out. Myron had also just arrived and I told them my plan.

I went inside with Rita. People were dancing and the band was playing "Woman" by John Lennon. I thought it was better than the last bar and if there was a band I wouldn't be able to hear anything the people I was with were saying. I said to Rita, "Let's stay here. It'll be really fun." She said "Oh god are you *crazy*?" She left for the parking lot before I could answer her.

I ran out and told everybody we should stay. June was crying and said she didn't care, Myron said he didn't want to get his car dented there and Rita jumped in and gave her opinion. It was decided. Everyone would go to the Down the Hill Bar. I said, "Not me. You can just leave me here." To my amazement they did just that.

I watched them pull out and form a caravan on Highway 29 on New Year's Eve 1984 but I was determined to make the most of the remaining three hours of 1983. I walked into the bar and some people at the bar turned to see who this woman daring to walk into a bar alone on New Year's Eve might be. After warding off an offer to earn 20 dollars from a man with blackheads around his ears, I ordered a drink.

The band did a Beach Boys medley. A bunch of people thought that was really great and ran to the dance floor. A biker type was staring at me. I thought maybe he wanted to dance with me or have sex or something so I approached him and said, "Do you want to dance?" His eyes got big and he said, "NO!" I walked back to my seat and he and the people he was with were looking at me and whispering. My self esteem plummeted.

Just then a woman in a low-cut black evening dress came up to me. "Laurie! I haven't seen you since you were married to Bob." It was Virginia, my ex-step-sister-in-law. We talked for a while about what jerks our ex-husbands were.

From a distance through the hazy smoke-filled room I could see some moving red and green lights flashing. As they came nearer I saw that they were part of a visor hat that a short man with a balding head was wearing. He came right up to Virginia and French-kissed her. When they stopped Virginia turned to me and explained to me that this was Frank, her fiance. They went to dance to a slow song.

I noticed a group of people I went to school with. I was wondering how I was going to get back to town so I walked up to Konrad and asked him for a ride home. He said they were going to be there awhile yet and it wasn't his car and he didn't know if they were going back to town after that. I retreated to my stool again.

Luke was standing there looking at me and smiling. I was glad to see some people I knew. Luke walked over to me. "Hi!" I chirped. "Hi." He eased closer. "Do you have any pot?" he asked. "No," I said. He smiled, walked up to the lady across from me, said something to her and they left.

Continued on page 47

Ben Liemer, Peter Gordon, Cary Baker, Rick Nielsen, John Alcock, Bun E. Carlos, Steve Leeds, Bob Merlis,

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fax 'n' rumours

Quits and Splits

So you didn't like the last **Gang of Four** album, eh? Turns out that "Hard" *is* the last Gang of Four album—just about. The group has split up after being dropped by EMI, their British record company.

Guitarist Andy Gill says there would have been no problem signing a new record contract, but that he and singer Jon King, the other original Gangster, had "done a lot of the things Gang of Four had set out to do. [Jon's] enthusiasm was past waning. I don't believe in making a virtue out of longevity."

Before the gang self-destructs they'll make one last US tour in April, yielding a live album to be released independently. (The band freed itself from its Warner Bros. contract stateside.) After that Gill and King each plan to form a new group. Bassist Sara Lee is currently working in London on Adele Bertei's forthcoming album. Drummer Hugo Burnham, jettisoned by the Gang a few months back (*Fax 'n' Rumours*, TP 90), has turned up miming (!) with ABC on US television. From each according to his ability. . .

□ □ □

It's the end of an era for **Madness** with the departure of keyboard player Mike Barson. On January 5 the group released a statement ruefully announcing Barson's retirement from Madness and "the wonderful world of pop music"; according to the statement, Barson will be settling permanently in Amsterdam. The band is not yet seeking a replacement.

□ □ □

The Specials, Madness' compadres in the 2-Tone revolution, are almost forgotten but not gone. Keyboard player **Jerry Dammers**, who may or may not be maintaining the group name singlehandedly, has reportedly finished an album. Singer **Terry Hall**, more recently of the Fun Boy Three, is now in another trio, Colour Field.

□ □ □

No more altering for **Altered Images**: The Scottish group unanimously fell apart in January. The member most eager to get going was Clare Grogan, much better known for her role in *Gregory's Girl* than as an Altered Image. Grogan has since appeared in another film, *Comfort and Joy*—like *Gregory's Girl*, directed by Bill Forsyth—and plans to continue singing on her own.

David Arnoff

They're young! They're beautiful! They're Lydia Lunch and Black Flag's Henry Rollins, the "item" of the week! Actually, the two have teamed up for a series of upcoming projects—"assaults is more like it," Rollins notes. (When this guy says "pain is my girlfriend," he means it!) Black Flag fans can rejoice: "My War," the band's first album of new material in two years, has just come out. The group will hit the road in late March for a six-week cross-country tour.

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AN AMAZING COLLABORATION

Alan Betrock, Jay Bresnehán, Susan Ollinick, Melani Rogers, Marilyn Laverty, Michael Pletsch, Terry Rompers,

• **RUNNING OUT OF SALAD PLATES** does not constitute a China Crisis, nor does a breakdown in relations with Peking. The English band China Crisis makes its U.S. debut with an album called *Working With Fire And Steel*, and the title track is already an underground hit. *Melody Maker* says the band writes "subtle, melodic, memorable songs," creating "a unique sound full of defiance and pleasure." We agree.

• **"A BUNCH OF WASTED ZOMBIES** at a Mad Max/Dawn Of The Dead get-together" is how one English journalist described the group Specimen. Never ones to quibble with the conservative British press, we prefer to think of Specimen as a meeting of intelligence, glitter and very heavy metal. Their Sire debut mini-album (it rhymes with 'catastrophe') is entitled *Batastrophe*, after one of London's trendiest night haunts, the Bat Cave. "Kiss Kiss Bang Bang," "The Beauty Of Poison," "Tell Tail" and "Returning From A Journey" are featured tracks.

• **POP QUIZ #1:** Who has worked with The Byrds, The Beach Boys, Ry Cooder, Harper's Bizarre and Randy Newman? Now, don't just race through this sentence, take a minute and think about it. That's better. None other than WB's own Van Dyke Parks, a musician who gets an "A" for ingenuity and a "B-Minus" for visibility. Fortunately, Van Dyke is back in the limelight again with *Jump!*, a very musical journey through the classic Uncle Remus children's stories. Only Van Dyke could bring Brer Rabbit into the '80s, but even he can't get it on Top 40 radio. If you want to hear cuts like the title track (not to be confused with Van Halen's "Jump") "Taps" and the long-eared "Invitation To Sin," you'll have to buy the album.

THIS IS ADVERTISING

Vol. 84, No. 1

• **WHO GIVES A WANG?** Some say their name is the phonetic equivalent of the Chinese term for perfect pitch; others say it is the sound made by a deliberately struck guitar—"Wang" on the downstroke, "Chung" on the upstroke. Whatever its semantic origins, the band Wang Chung traces its geographic roots to England, and its musical roots to the critically-acclaimed 57 Men. Wang Chung's Geffen debut LP is titled *Points On The Curve;* the first single is "Don't Let Go." The music has been labeled "emotive, evocative and wholly original." We call it clean, classy and honest rock 'n' roll.

• **FANS OF THE CURE** (and we're not talking detox) will be pleased by the release of *Japanese Whispers*, a "Best Of" Cure LP on Sire that recounts the band's work during the past year. What with maxi singles, mini albums, singles and imports, collecting The Cure used to be a full-time job (and you can quote us). Tell Mom. Maybe she'll buy this one for you. "Let's Go To Bed," "The Walk" and "The Love Cats" are among the hot cuts.

• **"THE JIMI HENDRIX ALBUM** that Brian Eno never produced" is how the clever folks in Burbank are referring to *Eos*, the new collaboration between ECM artists Terje Rypdal and David Darling. Rypdal (on guitar) and Darling (on cello) create sounds that would have pleased the master—this stuff is high energy and ethereal.

• **THE FRIVOLOUS GOSSIP** contained in these paragraphs is made possible by the runaway success of Van Halen's *1984*, The Pretenders' *Learning To Crawl* and Christine McVie's new solo album, *Christine McVie*. We bid them a hearty "thank you."

• *"This Is Advertising?" still resides within the stifling confines of P.O. Box 6868, Burbank, CA 91510. And we still have copies of If The Shoe Fits..., a 12-song LP sampler of new music for only four bucks. And we still accept donations. Go well, my child.*

'TEN YEARS AFTER' DEPT:
PAUL McCARTNEY EARNS £800,000 EACH DAY
EVEN WHEN HE DOESN'T WORK !!!!!!!!
RON WOOD hospitalized himself to kick a $2500 a week cocaine habit when the Stones' latest LP didn't sell as well as expected.
NO ONE ON TROUSER PRESS STAFF WILL ADMIT TO COMING UP WITH THE MAGAZINES NAME.
TROUSER PRESS

Roman Szolkowski

fax 'n' rumours

Alexis, Dennis and Jackie

Fresh Deaths for 1984

Nineteen eighty-three didn't pass away without dragging some rock celebs down with it.

• Beach Boy drummer **Dennis Wilson**, 39, drowned while swimming in the ocean at Marina del Rey, California on December 28. His death was rife with irony: Wilson was the only band member who surfed. Further, he was buried at sea by permission of President Reagan, the best friend the Beach Boys ever had in the White House.

Wilson was only a sporadic member of the Beach Boys in recent years, and the group itself has long ceased to be an influence on pop culture. His death is a more substantial signpost on the Beach Boys' journey into legend.

• **Alexis Korner** was the prime mover behind England's blues revival in the '60s. Although never a star in his own right, his Blues Incorporated harbored future Rolling Stones drummer Charlie Watts in 1961, and later played host to Mick Jagger, Brian Jones, Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker, among many others. Korner died of lung cancer January 1 in London; he was 55.

• The tragedy of **Jackie Wilson** came to an end with his death on January 21. The 49-year-old singer was in a coma since suffering an onstage heart attack eight and a half years ago. A powerful vocalist and fantastic dancer, Wilson had an uneven recording career but did score 16 Top 10 hits on the black chart. (Six of them crossed over to the national Top 10.) Check out his hair-raising performance in the movie *Go, Johnny, Go!* next chance you get.

HOOKED ON PROFIT

THE SLICKEE BOYS
CYBERNETIC DREAMS OF PI

First real album from this Washington D.C. five-piece. It's about time, and it's about fun. Ten originals and two covers, featuring the single "When I Go To The Beach". Not for serious types—just great songs, thrashing dual guitars, spooky keyboards, rollercoaster rhythms, and a whole lot of raunchy American fun. (TTR 8336)

CURTISS A
DAMAGE IS DONE

His debut LP "Courtesy" was aggressive and strange. The followup has the same qualities, but toss in a lot of sophistication and top notch production, and you get the picture. Rock-n-roll meets rhythm and blues meets pop—eccentric and unpredictable, with guts and soul, plus a twist all his own. And boy, can he shout. (TTR 8335)

SAFETY LAST
STRUCK BY LOVE

This is the kind of record that these days every idiot is gonna call rockabilly. Well, yeah, there's some of that, but "Struck By Love" features equal parts country, jumpin' western swing, and simple rock-n-roll. An album replete with tasty harmonies, finger snapping melodies, real okay instrumental junk, and, above all, a passion for the whole darn thing. (TTR 8334)

JEFF WARYAN
FIGURES

Jeff Waryan's first release features eight songs, which are subtle yet riveting. His guitar playing is fluid and expressive. The Minnesota Daily said: "Now that we've got MTV, now that everybody's fighting to play/have/sell the newest music, somebody's gotta worry about the good music. This isn't new and it sure isn't mainstream, it's just plain good. An easy one to miss, a crime to overlook. (TTR 8333)

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Jean-Charles Costa, Bill Flanagan, Richard Kuba, Pete Townshend, Jerry Jaffe, Marty Scott, Rick Lawler,

The French Connection

French rock music? In the past that combination has gone over as well as Chardonnay and a knish. But "Made in France," a compilation LP of 12 Gallic *artistes*, may change the country's musical standing.

The album was assembled by Eric Dufaure of Cachalot Records, who earlier brought us the pioneering "Deutschland Deutschland" sampler. "Made in France" draws from five record companies for an unbiased representation. *Vive la différence!*

Dance, Don't Gaze

Looks like "no video!" will be to the '80s what "no disco!" was to the '70s. In clubland, the backlash has begun against video monitors and giant screens that turn dancers into staring zombies. New York's Irving Plaza, recently renovated, proudly proclaims its lack of video facilities. The message here is if you want to watch TV, stay home; music is for dancing.

To celebrate *Trouser Press*' 10th anniversary, Irving Plaza is the site of our birthday party on March 8. The musical lineup includes **Jason and the Scorchers**, **Here Today**, and New York's semi-legendary **Planets**.

Ramonomania

Cover boy Joey Ramone has his own 10th anniversary to celebrate in 1984 besides that of *Trouser Press*: The **Ramones** willed themselves into existence in 1974. This month the band celebrates by recording a new album. As a reunion of sorts, original drummer Tommy Ramone will co-produce. Later in the year, Joey plans to release the first solo Ramone LP.

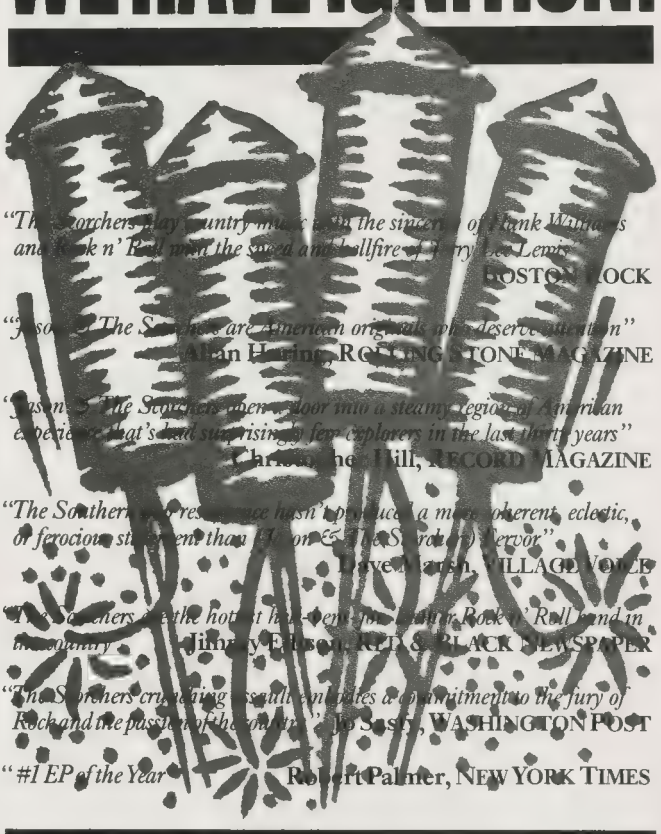
☐ ☐ ☐

Ramones fans should also know about *The Headbanger*, the band's official newsletter. Write to Shira Wild, 4434 E. Camelback #137, Phoenix, AZ 85018.

Correction

We're not waiting for letters this time: The photo on last month's *Hot Spots* page captioned "Fleshtones" was the Raybeats. But they're both good bands.

WE HAVE IGNITION!



"The Scorchers play country music with the sincerity of Hank Williams and rock n' Roll with the speed and wildfire of Jerry Lee Lewis"
BOSTON ROCK

"Jason & The Scorchers are American originals who deserve attention"
Alan Hering, ROLLING STONE MAGAZINE

"Jason & The Scorchers open the door into a steamy region of American experience that's dead surprising few explorers in the last thirty years"
Christopher Hill, RECORD MAGAZINE

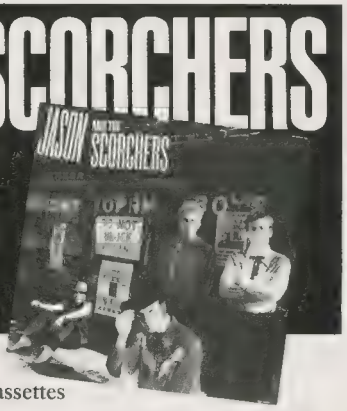
"The Southern experience hasn't produced a more coherent, eclectic, or ferocious statement than Jason & The Scorchers' Fervor"
Dave Marsh, VILLAGE VOICE

"The Scorchers are the hottest band to come from Rock 'n' Roll land in the country"
Jimmy Ellison, REV & BLACK NEWSPAPER

"The Scorchers crackling vitality, melodies & commitment to the fury of Rock and the passion of the South"
Jo Sasser, WASHINGTON POST

"#1 EP of the Year"
Robert Palmer, NEW YORK TIMES

JASON AND THE SCORCHERS
"FERVOR"



A specially priced EP features the hit "ABSOLUTELY SWEET MARIE" as seen on MTV

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Dennis Diken, Howie Klein, Kathy Schenker, Jay Boberg, Miles Copeland, Mike O'Brien, Betsy Alexander, Miranda Brown, Crescenzo Capece, Joop Visser

Monica Dee

MINUTEMEN

WHO: D. Boon (guitar/vocals), Mike Watt (bass/vocals), George Hurley (drums).

WHAT: **Paranoid Time** EP (New Alliance)
"Joy" & "Black Sheep"/"More Joy" (New Alliance)
The Punchline EP (SST)
What Makes a Man Start Fires? LP (SST)
Buzz or Howl Under the Influence of Heat LP (SST)

HOW: In 1971, 13-year-olds Boon and Watt began playing heavy metal together in San Pedro, California. The advent of punk rock clued them that they could write their own material. With Frank Tonche, they formed the Reactionaries in 1980, and blurted out loud/fast four-minute songs. Later that year Hurley replaced Tonche, and the band adopted its current name and radical modus operandi: 60-second songs with no repeat parts. A typical Minutemen live show jams over 30 songs into 40 minutes. They sometimes perform with acoustic guitars and bongos.

WHY: The Minutemen make anti-fusion music. They use particles of jazz, noise and especially funk to split apart the sluggish nucleus of rock. Their songs are necessarily fragmented, but quality musicianship creates an overall unity. The band rearranges fragments so adroitly and thoughtfully that even 30-second songs are fully satisfying compositions. The Minutemen do *not* play hardcore punk.

MIKE WATT: "In the Minutemen, we try to get rid of our rock 'n' roll roots. If you want to get corny about it, we're dada. Now we're free; we can play anything and it'll still sound like the Minutemen."

By John Leland

ELVIS BROTHERS

WHO: Rob Elvis [Newhouse] (guitar/vocals), Graham Elvis [Walker] (bass/vocals), Brad Elvis [Steakley] (drums).

WHAT: **Movin' Up** (Portrait)

HOW: Modest to a fault, Graham Elvis supplies this time line: "September 1982—Elvis Brothers get together in Champaign, Illinois, play the smallest bars they can book themselves into. December 1982—Elvis Brothers bosses of Champaign music world. January 1983—They vacation in the South Sea. February 1983—They retire. March 1, 1983—They spend afternoon in local studio making demo tape. March 30, 1983—Elvis Brothers sign with Portrait/CBS; announcement made by President Ron at medal ceremony in Washington. May 1983—Elvis Brothers take time out from appearances at shopping malls to record first album at Power Station in NYC. September 1983—**Movin' Up** escapes from pressing plant. Elvis Brothers return to University of Illinois to continue their research in nuclear physics and computer design."

WHY: Occasionally mistaken for a Stray Cats clone, the E-Bros are anything but. Rockabilly raveups form only a sliver of their repertoire, which includes cornfed Midwestern pure pop, rock 'n' swing, even ska (sort of). Throw it in a cocktail shaker with liberal scoops of ain't-we-got-fun goofiness and you've got one joyful noise. Would you expect anything less from a band that has also billed itself as the Ozzy Osbourne Brothers, the Weather Report Brothers, the Michael Jackson Brothers, the Bow Wow Wow Brothers, the Burl Ives Brothers, and the Flashdance Brothers?

GRAHAM ELVIS: "Work hard in life and earn a lot of money so you can hang out in the same exclusive places as the Elvis Brothers."

By Moira McCormick

Cathy Miller

THE GO-BETWEENS

WHO: Robert Forster (guitar/vocals), Grant McLennan (guitar/vocals), Robert Vickers (bass), Lindy Morrison (drums).

WHAT: Lee Remick/Karen (Australian Able)
People Say/Don't Let Him Come Back (Australian Able)
Stop Before You Say It/I Need Two Heads (UK Postcard)
Your Turn, My Turn/World Weary (Austr. Missing Link)
Send Me a Lullaby LP (UK Rough Trade)
Hammer the Hammer/By Chance (UK Rough Trade)
Cattle and Cane/Heaven Says (UK Rough Trade)
Before Hollywood LP (UK Rough Trade)
Man O'Sand to Girl O'Sea/This Girl, Black Girl (UK Rough Trade)

HOW: The Go-Betweens have taken a long, perhaps not thoroughly calculated, course to where they are among the most highly respected pop acts abroad. Nearly six years ago fellow U. of Queensland students Forster and McLennan discovered a shared taste for early electric Dylan. The Go-Betweens remained a two-piece for several years, gigging and recording three singles with sit-in drummers. Upon returning to Australia after a UK jaunt that netted the Postcard deal, Morrison became permanent percussionist; soon the first Rough Trade LP, done in native Brisbane, was in the bins. Two years later the trio added longtime pal and bassist Vickers to the team, with former bassist McLennan switching to guitar.

WHY: "To carry on the work of our parents," McLennan offers, not necessarily with tongue in cheek. How they became

Lisa Haun

who they are is a prime concern of the Go-Betweens' lyrics, with their reflections upon youth and its mysteries. Austere material gets a necessary lift from Forster's off-kilter and McLennan's somber vocals, and the pair's rough guitar interplay. Morrison and Vickers' aggressive rhythm section makes the curious time signatures sound deceptively simple. And when they feel like it, the Go-Betweens can rock like crazy.

ROBERT FORSTER: "The Go-Betweens are an adventurous pop group, in terms of four people going with melody and a wit based in experience—not only from travel but also from a heart."

By Don Howland

COMATEENS

WHO: Lyn Byrd (keyboards/vocals), Nic North (bass/vocals), Oliver North (guitar/vocals).

WHAT: Danger Zone/Cool Chick (Teenmaster)
2x5 compilation LP (two songs) (Red Star)
Ghosts/Latenight City/The Munsters (Cachalot)
Comateens LP (Cachalot)
Pictures on a String LP (Mercury/Virgin)

HOW: The Comateens began playing around New York City in late 1978. Band members reckon they went through about eight permutations before ending up with the current line-up of Byrd, the North brothers and a drum machine. (They use a live drummer for gigs.)

Their recording career has been equally checkered. A hook-up with an expatriate French producer starting his own label in New York made the Comateens relatively popular in France while being turned down by all the major US record companies. Their continental success piqued the interest of Britain's Virgin Records, who signed the band before even seeing them. With the prestige of a UK label behind them, the Comateens finally impressed Mercury Records, who had previously passed on the band.

Laura Levine

WHY: The Comateens play a lively range of dance music, from electro-funk to pop to garage-band raw. Their creaky old synthesizer sounds more like a Farfisa organ than a computer, which lends warmth and passion to such songs as "Get Off My Case," "The Late Mistake" and the Sgt. Pepperesque "Pictures on a String." The band has a flair for oldies—**Pictures on a String** has a version of the Crystals' "Uptown"—but translated into their own musical language.

LYN BYRD: "We're more interested in the *song* than a lot of bands, as opposed to having a lot of effects or a typical sound. We try not to limit or typecast ourselves. We've never decided to be one type of band."

By Karen Schlosberg

SELF-ANALYSIS

[Writing is] enough masturbation for me.
Writer NIK COHN, declining to be interviewed (1975) TP 10

I'd rather make music than write about it . . .
SCOTT ISLER (1974) TP 2

I'm really great at listening; I'd rather do that than anything else.
MARSHALL CRENSHAW (1983) TP 91

It's not like I have pretensions to high art.
JOHN HIATT (1980) TP 57

I know I'm not a genius because I have to work too hard.
ADAM ANT (1982) TP 69

My artistic integrity is 100 per cent uncompromised.
TODD RUNDGREN (1979) TP 43

I would never consider myself a musician; I'm just an entertainer.
JOHNNY THUNDERS (1980) TP 57

I think Phil [Collins] is technically a better singer than I am.
PETER GABRIEL (1980) TP 55

Drummers shouldn't sing—except Levon Helm.
DAVE EDMUNDS (1981) TP 59

I wouldn't call myself a singer . . . Sam Cooke's a singer.
JOE STRUMMER (1981) TP 60

It's hard to sing a song that makes you puke. You can't do both at the same time.
GRACE SLICK (1981) TP 60

PUNKARAMA

Punk will never die until something more dangerous replaces it.
JELLO BIAFRA of the Dead Kennedys (1981) TP 64

Punk is just something that's been created by the musical press to sell papers.
CHRIS SPEDDING (1977) TP 19

I don't like walking the streets and seeing 30,000 imitations of me.
JOHNNY ROTTEN (1977) TP 22

Just because we use the word "spit" in a song doesn't mean we're trying to be like the Sex Pistols.
EXENE of X (1980) TP 55

There is no doubt in my mind that the Sex Pistols were England's greatest contribution to rock 'n' roll, well over and above the Rolling Stones or the Beatles.
MALCOLM McLAREN (1983) TP 85

I like punk. I'm not that into it . . . I regard it as another style with good fashion and a good attitude.
PAUL McCARTNEY (1978) TP 26

YOU TOO CAN PUBLISH A ROCK MAGAZINE!

By Scott Isler

So you want to put out a rock magazine? Great idea!

But wait! Before you become too involved to answer the phone, you might want to peruse the following pages. After 10 years in this here rock rag biz, we at *Trouser Press* think we've learned something about How to Do It. To celebrate this anniversary, we considered running a thoroughly intimidating article detailing the unique mixture of genius, intelligence, creativity and sheer nerve that makes *Trouser Press* what it is.

However, we're too modest to brag. Instead, we're offering a public service: Advice to aspiring rock publishing magnates. In a truly selfless move, we're sharing the fruit of 10 years' labor. We've dug into *Trouser Press*' voluminous archives for case histories—*many never before revealed*—typical of what you can expect with your own publication. Read, and prosper! (If only someone had told *us* . . .)

HOW TO BEGIN

Scared? Don't be. Anybody can put out a rock magazine—and they do! Of course, it helps if you have an angle. Back when TP got rolling, British musicians were hardly featured on the cover of *Rolling Stone* (est. 1939), let alone *Time* or *Newsweek*. Now, with so many music 'zines out there, you've got to be pretty clever. How about a magazine dealing only with MTV veejays? Or giving plot outlines of all the videos shown on MTV? Your ingenuity is the limit. Just make sure the concept has something to do with MTV.

THE FACTS OF (PUBLISHING) LIFE

There are a variety of ways to produce a magazine. Lettering and drawing each issue by hand is the slowest, and not recommended by *Trouser Press*. You may want to start out—as we did—with a mimeograph machine, supplemented by offset printing for pages with photographs.

If you hang in there long enough, you'll probably move up printing's evolutionary scale. When you stop cranking 'em out yourself and give the job to a printing press, you'll be major league.

Printers are as human as anyone, sometimes too much so. *Trouser Press* switched to a new one for the magazine's first full-color cover (TP 20, 1977). The day blueprints were to arrive for final checking, we learned that the printer—located in New Jersey's Bible Belt—had discovered a four-letter word in the issue and refused to have anything to do with our slimy kind. We went begging back to our previous

Janine Safer, Pete Silverton, Paul Rambali, Jacqui Warren, Doreen D'Agostino, Mark Rye,

In ten years I hope there will be plenty of young bands around who'll tell me I'm boring, and continue the tradition of rock 'n' roll.
BOB GELDOF of the Boomtown Rats (1977) TP 24

Nowadays, everybody's in tune, everybody can play great. I want to hear a band that *can't* play. ALEX HARVEY (1975) TP 11

[New wave and punk] is very similar to what we were doing; being as obnoxious as possible to a large segment of the population.
PAUL KANTNER recalling the Jefferson Airplane (1983) TP 83

I've got the feeling that at this particular point, if it wasn't for punk, which is taking it right back to the roots of shit-kicking rock 'n' roll—back to "fuck you" music, sheer adrenalin, [rock 'n' roll] would be in a sad state of affairs.
JIMMY PAGE of Led Zeppelin (1977) TP 23

The fuck-you finger must be the new peace salute of the '80s.
ALAN VEGA (1982) TP 73

THE NITTY GRITTY

I've always found musicians very coarse people, often quite uninspired and unintelligent.
MALCOLM McLAREN (1983) TP 85

In our music we're looking for the big enema, the big catharsis.
GERALD CASALE of Devo (1978) TP 27

I get a religious experience when I have a crap. HUGH CORNWELL of the Stranglers (1981) TP 58

We don't have no big-ass fucking lawyer who goes down and gives a blow-job to some asshole at CBS.
CYRIL JORDAN, explaining why the Flamin' Groovies haven't succeeded in the US (1978) TP 30

I may throw my crotch about a bit but I can still be innocent inside.
ADAM ANT (1982) TP 80

Tits and asses are gifts god gave us and it's to my best interest to use them. DALE BOZZIO of Missing Persons (1983) TP 83

I think the human body's about one of the most ugly things ever created. Everyone has lumps and distorted bits and pieces.
JOHN LYDON (1980) TP 51

I do business like a barbarian. My word is gold and I split everything with everybody. The best way to lick rock 'n' roll is to be a savage.
IGGY POP (1983) TP 81

We're an up band. We're not a fucking downer. ANNABELLA of Bow Wow Wow (1982) TP 69

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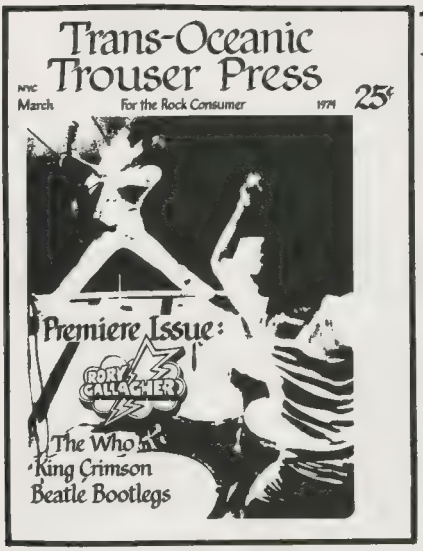
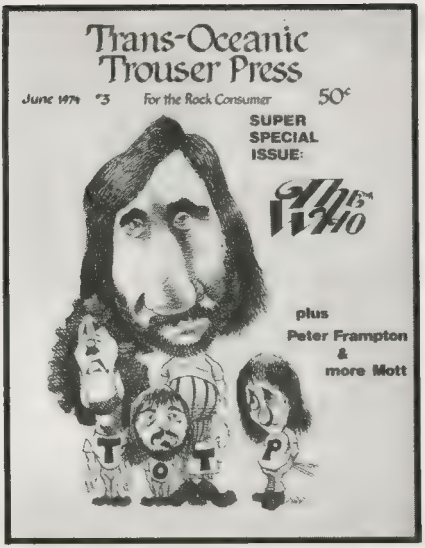


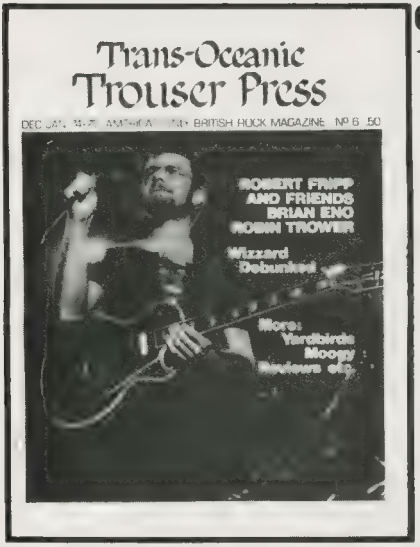
Not too impressive, is it? Well, we hadda start somewhere, and did, with idols the Who. The article inside was not an interview. Neither were the features on King Crimson or Rory Gallagher. We did have some Beatle bootleg albums on hand to critique. Copies of this issue have been known to change hands for more than the cover price!

3



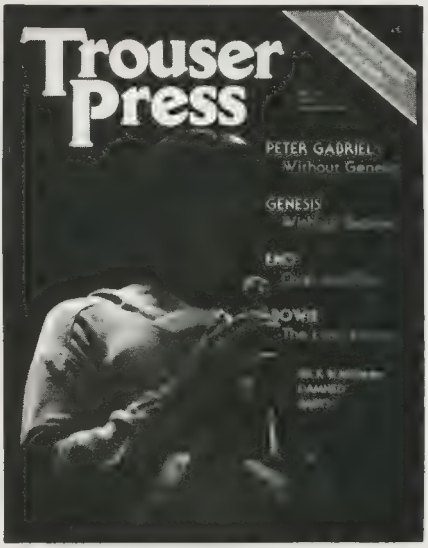
Guess Who's on the cover again? Still no interview, but a nifty cover caricature by Marc Nadel added class to an issue built around the band's first New York shows in three years. (Outside New York, hardly anyone knew TP existed.) Co-editors Ira Robbins and Dave Schulps proudly waved copies in front of John Entwistle and Keith Moon, with whom they wangled an afternoon's drinking. (TP paid!) Both musicians expressed annoyance at the cartoon: Entwistle for his small stature, Moon for his nose.

6



A snazzy cover photo of bearded Robert Fripp (by Ron Gott) heralded the start of an exhaustive three-part history of King Crimson and other Fripperies by Ihor Slabicky—the magazine's first major interview. Now used to hobnobbing with the stars, we also got to Brian Eno. The most interesting part of his interview was a nude photo session. Playgirl magazine had asked him to pose for the centerfold, and he needed test shots—or so he told photographer Linda Danna. She still has the negatives, and Eno swore he'd break her lens caps if they ever saw print.

20



A technical breakthrough: our first full-color cover. Unfortunately, you wouldn't know it from the photo of Peter Gabriel bathed in red light. We were more thrilled with the back *cover, a Dave Edmunds ad with better skin tone. It's 1977, and the Damned jostling Rick Wakeman for cover credit is a sign of the times. This issue also had an announcement that TP was gearing up for monthly onslaughts. Hello, big-time.*

AMERICAN RUES

I won't make any friends saying this, but if Americans like something it's probably crap.
STEWART COPELAND of the Police (1981) TP 59

When we're completely meaningless and have lost all credibility such that we can't look a fellow musician straight in the eye—that's probably when we'll be number one in America.
STING (1981) TP 59

I don't think America would know a good rock 'n' roll band unless they were advertised on TV.
DAVE HIGGS of Eddie & the Hot Rods (1978) TP 27

In New York or LA you can go out and get anything at any time, as long as you get your shots afterwards. ALICE COOPER (1980) TP 52

A quick spree 'round the States taking in all the sights and buying all the crap you can lay your hands on—that's what we call fun. So long as we don't have to live there.
JOE STRUMMER (1980) TP 48

I wish [Americans] would bring up their kids with a little more discipline, stop giving them hamburgers and shit like that.
RITCHIE BLACKMORE (1978) TP 30

We'd love to come to America but we won't until Virgin releases our albums here. . . They don't think we'll go over. I think we could conquer America. MARTYN WARE, then of the Human League (1980) TP 56

I can't wait to find out what America makes of the Pistols. Or what the Pistols do to America.
GIOVANNI DADOMO (1977) TP 22

REMEMBER MY NAME

If you're gonna sell out, make sure they're buying.
MARTHA DAVIS of the Motels (1982) TP 79

One disadvantage to having our own company is that if the next record doesn't sell we may have to drop ourselves.
SGT. BLOTTO of Blotto (1982) TP 72

I find it very tiresome to be famous. NICO (1979) TP 40

I'm not making a comeback, I'm making a living.
RICHARD HELL (1982) TP 79

We had a number one single and were still getting $40 a week.
STEVE MARRIOT, on the Small Faces (1981) TP 63

printer, who gleefully charged us double for the rush job. So know your printer or watch your f*¢#in' language. (Or how about a magazine on born-again Christian rockers?)

GIVING THE PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT

You may have difficulty at first getting interviews with big stars who never heard of your diddly-squat little magazine. Don't despair, and take what you can get. *Trouser Press'* first exclusive interview (TP 5) was with Moogy Klingman. He's not the type to get mobbed on the street, but at the time we hung on his every sentence. Keep pestering people at record companies, and soon they'll know who *you* are (and learn not to take your calls).

Fortunarely, rock magazines can get away with other types of writing than interviews—record reviews, for instance. Everyone's got opinions; what makes yours more valuable than the others is that you're going to the trouble of forcing it on strangers. Don't be afraid to make fun of a recording artist's sexual preference or body weight because you didn't understand his or her hit single. Remember, it's your responsibility to educate the public! You will sound even more authoritative if you quote song titles correctly.

WRITERS LOST IN SPACE

In the beginning—whether from force of circumstance or bloated ego—you might be writing most of your magazine yourself. Eventually, though, you'll develop a squad of writers. Some you may seek out; others will seek you out, drawn by the common bond of love of music matched only by love of free records.

Once you give assignments to writers you'll discover a curious phenomenon: They inhabit a time zone of their own, regardless of geographic location. What you think of as "next week" doesn't reach their district until a great while later. Magazine editors learn to compensate for this time warp by assigning early and/or giving spurious deadline dates. In extreme cases, phoning a tardy contributor every 15 minutes also helps.

Other facts have to be considered too in dealing with outside writers—notoriously the mail—and you're sure to be delighted by unpredictable variations. Back in the heady summer of '77, we eagerly expected a Sex Pistols feature from a London writer. A couple of weeks went by, and still we expected it. At the last possible moment we learned the precious manuscript was pouched via jet to a New York record company, from where it would be hand-delivered to us. On a Friday—the deadest of deadlines—the article landed and a messenger was dispatched to our office. The messenger never showed up. Some frantic phone calls revealed our messenger to be a practicing Moslem who hurried home before sundown, taking our article with him. No, he had no phone. We sent him a telegram. The article showed up the following Tuesday, by which time the TP office resembled post-Koolaid Jonestown. Needless to say, it got into the issue.

(Moral: No matter how horrible things look, a resourceful magazine will find a way, if perhaps at the cost of its staff's mental health.)

Okay, enough of the basics. You'll find out soon enough what a nerve-wracking, weary-

Susan Blond, R. Stevie Moore, Rene Magritte, Neil Cooper, Dave Marsh, Elly Smith.

We thought we'd always be a cult band. SLIM JIM PHANTOM of the Stray Cats (1983) TP 91

I don't mind being a cult band, but I think rock 'n' roll is meant for the masses, not for a few weirdos. LUX INTERIOR of the Cramps (1984) TP 94

I want our records to be hits. I want my kids to go to college.
MARTHA DAVIS (1980) TP 52

We're definitely not an underground group anymore. The only place left for us to go where people think we're crazy is to hang out with Chuck Mangione.
CLEM BURKE of Blondie (1981) TP 62

We didn't look at music as an art form but as a job we're best suited for, for which we can get paid wages. TERRY HALL of Fun Boy 3 (1982) TP 74

This is glamorous, yeah: You drag your butt all over the world. It's a regular job. RICK NIELSEN of Cheap Trick (1980) TP 57

The only thing I could see doing is the opposite of touring, where I stay in one place and the audience tours to see me.
BRIAN ENO (1978) TP 32

People change when they get a hit. Your back straightens. Your acne goes. I know, because it happened to me.
PETER NOONE (1980) TP 55

I pull a lot more chicks now since they've seen my name in the papers. NICK LOWE (1977) TP 22

Cute English boys will always be more popular than talented American bands.
EXENE (1984) TP 94

I think you can be successful and still keep a certain amount of self-respect. PAUL WELLER (1979) TP 38

The best way you can prove responsibility for what you do is to go out and live it and not get killed doing it.
IGGY POP (1980) TP 47

I don't intend to wind up parking cars somewhere.
KEITH MOON (1976) TP 14

We haven't made too many of the obvious mistakes. Nobody has killed themselves off with dope, nobody has done anything wildly dishonest, nobody has killed anybody. We never put out what I feel was a dishonest record, we've never deliberately gone out to exploit large numbers of people.
PETE TOWNSHEND (1978) TP 27

22 ◄

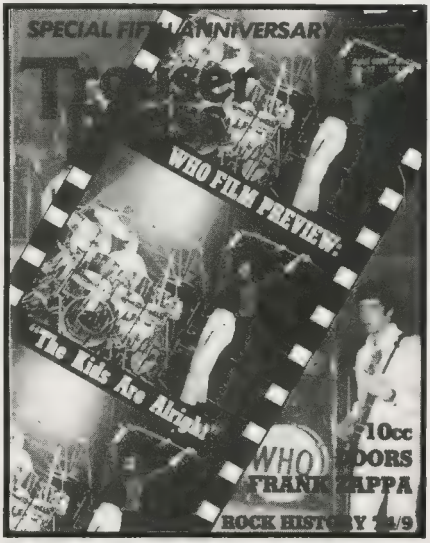
It's still 1977, and pretty boy Johnny Rotten (as he is still known to a few) graces our cover. This stunning painting was by Rob Burger, an airbrush demon who promptly priced himself out of our league. (But not before we nagged him into a Pink Floyd cover for TP 28.) In keeping with the commercialization of new wave, we tried to make a poster out of this image, but the printer botched it. Note too-hip anti-new wave article, and continuing Jimmy Page interview. We tried to cover all bases.

30 ►

Here we are turning 30, another milestone. The joke in the lower right corner refers to a hippie adage that dates us badly. Somewhere underneath that hair is Todd Rundgren, shattering TP's perfect record of UK-only artists on the cover. We were still "America's Only British Rock Magazine," but were loosening up a bit. (And running out of supportable limey bands.) Neither the David Bowie nor Buddy Holly stories were interviews.

33 ◄

This parody of a 16 *magazine cover was (we thought) the most brilliant thing we'd done. Then we got letters saying, "Yuccchh! That stupid cover looks like* 16 *magazine!" But we were more abashed at Lester Bangs's Ramones article, which ran word-for-word in the British weekly* New Musical Express *before our issue hit the street. Since we'd assigned and arranged the piece, we asked Bangs what the hell he was doing reselling his articles. "I always do this," he replied innocently. Lester Bangs is now dead.*



37 ►

Our fifth anniversary issue threw the Who on the cover (again) for an interview with Jeff Stein, director of the then-imminent Kids Are Alright *movie. (About a year and a half earlier we ran an ad soliciting film clips for the project.) One of the anniversary features was a survey of various persons' whereabouts in March, 1974; among the respondents were Lou Reed, Paul Weller, Tom Petty, Captain Sensible, Meat Loaf (*Meat Loaf??*) and an unprintable Elvis Costello.*

HI-Q's

Is it true you're an idiot?
LOU REED, to a Cleveland disc jockey (1976) TP 14

We've got a pretty wide demographic. MARTYN WARE of B.E.F. (1983) TP 89

If they played our records on the radio and MTV as much as Duran Duran, I think they'd sell like hotcakes.
BILLY ZOOM of X (1984) TP 94

We're just a bunch of fucking lamebrains. FRANCIS ROSSI of Status Quo (1975) TP 9

I never claimed to be original.
GARY NUMAN (1981) TP 58

Stupidity is like hydrogen; it's everywhere, it's the basic building block of the universe.
FRANK ZAPPA (1980) TP 47

I know your type. This is the worst nightmare . . . If you weren't a journalist you'd never be invited to anything hip.
LOU REED, to an interviewer (1979) TP 36

Springsteen [is] perhaps the most mediocre nobody to become a superstar since Chubby Checker.
IRA ROBBINS (1976) TP 12

We've been told we can be successful here if we want to. But we'll decide that after we've worked out whether America deserves us or not.
TERRY HALL (1983) TP 91

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ROCK

When your culture abandons you, create a new one.
IRA ROBBINS (1977) TP 22

The characteristic organization of the new world is small, independent, mobile and intelligent.
ROBERT FRIPP (1975) TP 7

I'm ready for the new soul era.
FRED SCHNEIDER of the B-52's (1980) TP 57

Creativity is on the streets. Pop is reactionary.
RIC OCASEK (1983) TP 82

De-evolution is basically an extended joke . . . a mythology for people to believe in.
JERRY CASALE (1982) TP 70

A very interesting little record company has just begun operations. PAUL RAMBALI, on the start of Stiff (1976) TP 16

Among the first companies we approached with our demos was

ing, soul-destroying experience rock magazine publishing can be.

"Are there no rewards?" you ask. "No wealth? Sex? No sealing my nose with cocaine?"

Fool! The rarefied pleasures of this business cannot be calibrated on such an earthly scale. Among the finer delights in store for you are:

FIGHTS WITH THE STARS

No matter how careful you think you are, you are bound to offend somebody sooner or later. Celebrities—especially rock celebrities—don't think like us normal people. Left Banke/Stories maestro Michael Brown abruptly ended an interview when TP publisher Ira Robbins asked him what his protégés, the Beckies, would be wearing onstage when they toured.

Two years after meeting, Flamin' Groovie Cyril Jordan—apparently miffed by an unfavorable record review—lambasted this writer and Robbins, who wasn't there, in the pages of *NY Rocker*. The attack provoked an even more virulent letter from Robbins, printed in the following *Rocker*. Jordan finally called to apologize, and we all made nice again. But the incident demonstrates the unseemly rancor some musicians hold for being one-sidedly attacked in print. Well, nobody's perfect.

And beware of stars who demand photo approval.

FIGHTS WITH THE STARS' REPRESENTATIVES

As a magazine baron, you will be in touch less with superstar musicians—who have more important things to do, like taking drugs—than with those who represent them, i.e. managers and press officers. Unfortunately, these people, naturally desirous of pleasing their clients, can be even worse to deal with than the stars themselves.

To illustrate a pathbreaking article on Kiss in 1978, we ran a sequence of photographs showing the newly-merchandized Kiss dolls in a group grope with Barbie dolls. The band thought the photos were hilarious. The president of their public-relations firm sent a letter expressing "total disappointment": "We surely believed that *Trouser Press* worked on a high caliber level and would not resort to such a disgusting display." In the accompanying article Gene Simmons showed *his* high caliber by stating, "Even a non-fan's got to say, 'God, I hate those guys, but they sure have big dicks!'"

When he founded Stiff Records, Jake Riviera used to send us the friendliest letters. Then he left Stiff to devote himself to managing Elvis Costello; despite being the first US magazine to splash El on its cover (in late 1977), we've never gotten near him again. Now that Costello practically grants interviews to toy train collectors' journals and still snubs us, we have to wonder: Could it have been that TP cover in 1979—the one with the Costello puppet on it and the legend, "Who pulls the strings?" (Our thinkpiece didn't say.) Nah!

FIGHTS WITH READERS

The glory of this free country is that you can print anything you want as long as you're prepared to take a pounding for it—verbally, at least. You'll find your readership will rarely write in to congratulate you for critical taste or journalistic excellence. They will sniff blood, though, at the merest hint of disrespect toward their musical heroes or ideals.

Tom Werman, Sarl Becker, Jeff Stein, Ron Gott, Harry George, Harry Palmer, Ira Sherman,

Stiff . . . [Jake Riviera] dismissed us as "fuckin' queer music."
TOM ROBINSON (1978) TP 29

There was a time when I thought getting a record contract was the biggest thing in the world.
GARY KLEBE of Shoes (1981) TP 61

We wouldn't have girlfriends if we weren't in the Ramones.
JOHNNY RAMONE (1978) TP 33

We did one straight, raunchy rock 'n' roll album, and one is enough.
JOHN LYDON, on the Sex Pistols (1979) TP 38

CULTURE SHOCKS

If people expect me to do any one thing, fuck 'em.
GRAHAM PARKER (1978) TP 25

I'd rather see Liza Minnelli than any rock performer.
ADAM ANT (1982) TP 80

I'd rather not become totally dependent on the technology I use. THOMAS DOLBY (1982) TP 79

I can't submit to the whims of fans as to what they think my destiny ought to be.
BRYAN FERRY (1977) TP 23

It just wasn't enough for me to be a guitar player for the Rolling Stones. MICK TAYLOR (1979) TP 41

There is quite a tradition in music, as well as other arts, of looking to other cultures for things to steal . . . The principle of theft—with respect—should be encouraged.
PETER GABRIEL (1983) TP 81

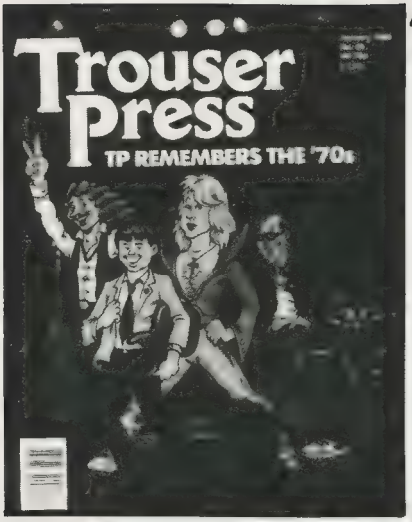
I taught Bob Marley music, seen? Eighty percent of the songs that Bob Marley wrote was co-written by me and never credited.
PETER TOSH (1983) TP 92/93

I see myself as a white European, but I'd like to restate the black values of the '60s.
ANNIE LENNOX of the Eurythmics (1983) TP 90

I think working with Chic is probably one of the most radical steps we could take. Contemporary black music is not considered safe by white audiences.
CHRIS STEIN of Blondie (1981) TP 62

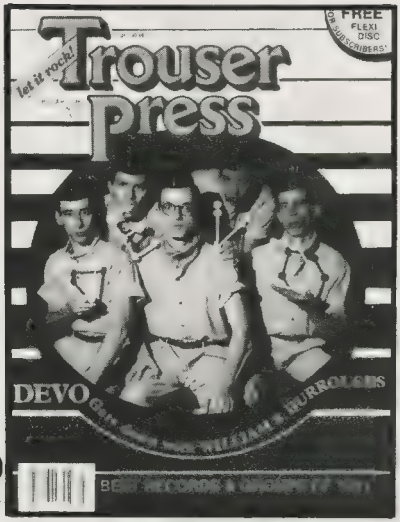
As a cultural contribution, all [the Twist] did was help chiropractors . . . but it did make it possible for people to admit they liked rock 'n' roll.
DICK CLARK (1981) TP 63

I'm extremely uncommitted to music. It's like a hobby to me.
NICK LOWE (1982) TP 75



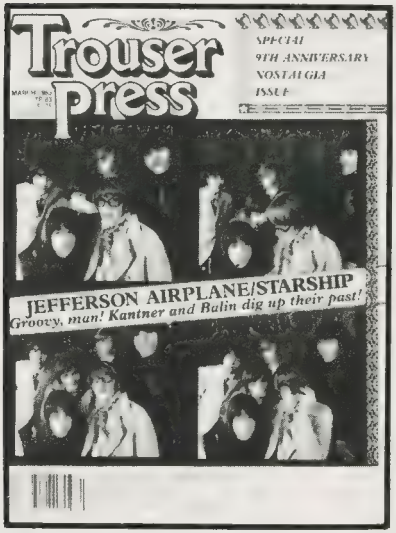
46

For the turn of the decade, another swell concept: A half-issue salute to the '70s. Flip the magazine over for another "front" cover and half-issue predicting the '80s. We swiped the idea from an old Mad *magazine, and sent a copy to* Mad *publisher William Gaines in acknowledgment. He responded with the blessing "Good luck with it!" as if it were our first edition. His heart was in the right place, though.*



70

The idea was to do a different kind of Devo article. They suggested a meeting with Buckminster Fuller or Marilyn Chambers. The first wasn't available, and the search for the second ended with a vaguely threatening phone message. We counterproposed William S. Burroughs, abyss-starer supreme. Several dozen phone calls later, the event took place in "Bill's Bunker," Burrough's loft in New York's derelict district. It's not certain who was talking at whom, but the conversation sure was bizarre. This one New Musical Express *reprinted with permission.*



83

We've come a long way, baby, since "America's Only British Rock Magazine." Arguably our most controversial cover, these vintage Jefferson Airplane photos shook up insecure new wavers. As usual, Trouser Press *was ahead of its time, anticipating the psychedelic revival by 43 days.*

88

Yet another cover parody (of the supermarket tabloids) that nobody got. The Jam article was one of a series of rundowns on imaginary compilation LPs. The band's own Snap! *collection, released a few months later, used all but five of our suggestions—and duplicated the first four tracks in the same order as on our do-it-yourself package. You read it here first!*

CAREER CHOICES

It's an actual fact that I'm a better cook than I am a record producer.
ROY THOMAS BAKER (1982) TP 69

Pop music isn't by any means the central issue of my life; it's hardly a peripheral one.
BRIAN ENO (1982) TP 76

I don't like being stared at when I'm playing.
ROBERT FRIPP (1978) TP 32

I don't want to keep regurgitating the same rituals.
STING (1982) TP 73

I've been developing my career as a movie-goer.
TOM VERLAINE (1982) TP 69

SERIOUSLY, NOW

You shouldn't be in a band if you don't want to influence people. Or you should just play instrumentals. DAVE WAKELING of the Beat (1982) TP 80

We did a gig in front of six people in Poughkeepsie and they loved us. ANDY SUMMERS of the Police (1979) TP 36

Around '76, Joe Strummer told me that people have got to start writing about more important issues. That made an impression.
PAUL WELLER (1981) TP 62

If you wrote about death completely convincingly you'd kill all your readers. WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS (1982) TP 70

It would be naive to think that music is the first priority you have to think about. We're in an area where visuals play a strong part in selling records.
ANDY SUMMERS (1979) TP 45

Nothing I do is fashionable at the time I do it.
TODD RUNDGREN (1978) TP 30

FAMOUS FIRST WORDS

You Trouser Pressers are always up to something. . .
JAKE RIVIERA (1978) TP 29

The first time I ever got any press was in *Trouser Press* for [Southend Rock].
ALF MOYET of Yazoo (1983) TP 82

The Australians are coming.
JIM GREEN/DAVE SCHULPS (1976) TP 17

AC/DC will surely find a place in the hearts, minds and bodies of the kind of 12-year-old girls who look three times their age.
KAREN ROSE (1976) TP 16

King Crimson is completely over. For ever and ever.
ROBERT FRIPP (1974) TP 6

Ira Robbins took a lot of flak for his prescient "new wave is dead" editorial back in 1977. The all-time winner in the TP hate-mail sweepstakes is this writer, thanks to a pan of the Ramones' **Pleasant Dreams**. One anonymous fan evidently fed the offending page into a paper-shredder, then diced it into a fine powder, poured it into an envelope and returned it to us. Impressive.

FIGHTS WITH PERFECT STRANGERS

Accustomed as we are to constant psychic warfare, we can still be caught off-guard sometimes. The upper echelon of *Trouser Press* management, for example, has learned to dread the monthly arrival of *Don't Believe a Word!*, the cartoon by Roman Szolkowski. Szolkowski, "the Polish madman," speaks no recognized language. His column is delivered to our office by a small mute hunchback, who has been seen disappearing down manholes afterwards. The best we can do is pray that the artist's outrages, committed in the name of humor, be not too libelous.

One month last year we were pleased that *Don't Believe a Word!* contained nothing more offensive than a drawing of the Clash in designer battle fatigues. (For that we received a negligible number of death threats from Clash fans.) The other illustration depicted Alvin the Chipmunk for a joke about the Chipmunks suing the Bee Gees for plagiarism.

A few months later we got a letter from a lawyer representing the Chipmunks. Mr. Alvin was not pleased with the unauthorized use of his likeness. nor with any false rumors about the Chipmunks' legal activities. Mr. Alvin kindly requested we honor his trademark, or he and his pals *would* take legal action—against *us*.

In this business, you never know who your friends are.

We hope the above has given you an idea of the joys of rock magazine publishing. Some rock writers—frustrated musicians, no doubt—hobnob with their subject matter just to soak up the fame by association. We too have had our memorable encounters—the Jam visiting our humble establishment and stealing all the wall posters—but after 10 years one starts thinking about posterity. Many have proven that rock writing can also be great literature. May your publication attain the aesthetic heights scaled by *Trouser Press*.

Like, y'know? ■

TROUSER FAX

In our first decade, *Trouser Press* has:

- Published 5,508 pages, including 859 feature articles.
- Reviewed 2,029 albums (not counting Jon Young's *Hit & Run*, which covered 1,291 more!), including 279 compilations. Jim Green has reviewed 1,295 singles in *Green Circles*.
- We've also reviewed 935 indie records in *America Underground*, and 104 rock books.

Most popular cover subjects:

The Who (7 covers)
Rolling Stones (5)
Blondie (3)
Cars (3)
Clash (3)
Elvis Costello (3)
Kinks (3)

Nick Kimberley, Ken Berry, Gerard Talbot

A lot of people tell us that these are the best years even though we are struggling.
MARGOT OLAVERA, then in the Go-Go's (1980) TP 57

It was doomed to fail: four blokes, not even out of their teens, shoved together, living in squalor. STEVE WINWOOD, on Traffic (1981) TP 61

Elvis Costello has produced a classic [album] in his first try. Where he'll go from here should be exciting to watch.
DAVE SCHULPS (1977) TP 22

The Human League does little to encourage belief that the dropping price of synthesizers will usher in a new age of popular music. STEVEN GRANT (1980) TP 47

Much love and respect to your fine paper. . .
PETE TOWNSHEND (1974) TP 2

I always thought *Trouser Press* was an English paper.
ADRIAN BELEW (1982) TP 75

MEOW!

I'm not really bothered by what people think. As long as they don't say it to my face, who cares? PETER HOOK of New Order (1983) TP 91

Her boring bloody music is complete sub-hippie drivel dressed up in knickers for the sake of art. NICK LOWE, on Siouxsie (and the Banshees) (1981) TP 59

We'd bump into each other in the studio and give each other dirty looks. He thinks he's too much of a star to talk to me and if I talk to him I'm groveling, so we don't talk. JOE JACKSON, on Elvis Costello (1979) TP 38

[Fripp] wasn't the main influence in [King Crimson], however much he cared to think he was.
GREG LAKE (1978) TP 28

***Rolling Stone* said I was trying to destroy pop music; they're out of their minds.**
CHRIS STEIN of Blondie (1982) TP 77

People have called the Cars a commercial Roxy Music; that's what Jann Wenner said to me, anyway.
BRYAN FERRY (1980) TP 54

I like Jonathan Richman. I think he's got a great sense of humor. . . if he's kidding, that is.
JOHNNY ROTTEN (1977) TP 22

Most people don't notice he's not there. PHIL COLLINS, on Peter Gabriel's departure from Genesis (1976) TP 14

Nobody compares us to the Velvet Underground and that's probably the one group we all love.
MICHAEL STIPE of REM (1983) TP 88

Honorine Gainer, Ihor Slabicky, Nancy Lewis, Charlie Dmont

I thought the Velvet Underground stunk. IAN HUNTER (1980) TP 53

My old man still shouts at me for not doing the dishes before I go to bed. BONO of U2 (1982) TP 71

I listen to the first album now and I just cringe, it all sounds so primitive.
PAUL WELLER (1979) TP 38

Jerry [Harrison] *is* Talking Heads; he's responsible for that sound. [He] was playing the things people have assumed Brian Eno or David Byrne were doing.
TINA WEYMOUTH (1982) TP 72

I live a kind of normal life . . . for a New Yorker.
MICK JAGGER (1980) TP 54

I can think of a lot better pseudonyms than Bono! Why couldn't I have thought of something like "Sting"?
PAUL HEWSON (1983) TP 87

It's all very well being clever and playing in ridiculous time signatures, but it doesn't make for a good pop song. NICK RHODES of Duran Duran (1983) TP 90

People sometimes comment that I seem to like almost everything . . . JIM GREEN (1977) TP 22

AND SO FORTH

I think the worst thing in pop music is how people overstay their welcome. I hope we don't go on for more than two or three years.
DAVE WAKELING (1981) TP 58

I'm sick and tired of waiting around for people gradually to discover us. I don't want it happening in nine years' time, when maybe all our best songs are gone and we're just churning out rubbish. GLENN TILBROOK of Squeeze (1981) TP 62

If the Clash stay together for five years they'll probably be the new Rolling Stones.
IAN HUNTER (1979) TP 39

George Martin would have been a terrific producer . . . If he'd only know the right time to go to the toilet. ANDREW LOOG OLDHAM (1978) TP 29

Phil's a little temperamental . . .
JOEY RAMONE, on Spector (1979) TP 40

There's nothing more pitiful than someone who's lost touch with what's going on.
NICK LOWE (1978) TP 31

Pain is my girlfriend. I feel pain every day of my life.
HENRY ROLLINS of Black Flag (1983) TP 86

I'm an acid casualty.
NICK LOWE (1977) TP 22

ALUMNI BULLETIN

KAREN ROSE (*co-editor,* TP 1-9; *co-publisher,* TP 2-9; *publisher,* TP 10-14; *publisher emeritus/a,* TP 15-32) founded Rock Read, a music book mail-order service, in 1978. She now runs her own advertising and direct marketing agency.

DAVE SCHULPS (*mentor,* TP 1; *co-editor,* TP 2-9; *senior editor,* TP 10-13; *managing editor,* TP 14-32; *editor,* TP 33-43; *associate publisher,* TP 21-43; *contributing editor,* TP 44-present) and **JIM GREEN** (*retail distribution,* TP 7; *distribution,* TP 8, 10-14; *distribution manager,* TP 9; *associate editor,* TP 15-57; *contributing editor,* TP 58-present) work together producing syndicated radio shows.

BARBARA WOLF (*art director,* TP 1-7) owns a design studio in Portland, Maine.

SUE WEINER (*subscriptions,* TP 5-8, *subscription manager,* TP 9-18; *special projects,* TP 19-21) has co-written *The Beatles A–Z* and *The Rolling Stones A–Z,* and is the editor of *True Romance* magazine.

IHOR SLABICKY (*business manager,* TP 5-9; *systems programmer,* TP 10-12) is a systems engineer in the submarine signal division at Raytheon.

LINDA DANNA ROBBINS (*photo lab work,* TP 12; *contributing photographer,* TP 13-14; *staff photographer,* TP 15-23; *invaluable assistance,* TP 24-31; *office manager,* TP 51-92/3) works in a New York literary agency.

JOEL WEBBER (*advertising sales,* TP 14, 36-46; *advertising manager,* TP 15-35; *advertising,* TP 47-49; *record advertising,* TP 50-59; *promotion,* TP 60-86) is president of Uproar Record Company, and manages the Units, Earl Scooter and the Rebo 5.

LOUISE GREIF (*administrative assistant,* TP 22-35; *administration/production,* TP 36-42; *invaluable assistance,* TP 44), after seven head-breaking years, has left the music business.

LINDA FRANCISCHELLI (*invaluable assistance,* TP 24-35) is a senior editor at *High Society* magazine.

FRAN DeFEO (*invaluable assistance,* TP 31-32) works with **LINDA WALKER** (*invaluable assistance,* TP 34-35), national special projects promotion manager at PolyGram Records.

TIM SOMMER (*invaluable assistance,* TP 32-33; *staff,* TP 38-44) has written for the *Village Voice* and *Sounds,* the British music weekly.

JON YOUNG (*invaluable assistance,* TP 34-43; *special projects editor,* TP 43-57; *contributing editor,* TP 58-present) is associate editor of affiliate communications at Home Box Office, Inc.

JUDY STECCONE (*assistant art director,* TP 42-43; *art director,* TP 44-91) lives beyond the law in San Francisco.

PEARL LIEBERMAN (*staff,* TP 43; *invaluable assistance,* TP 44) is research supervisor at *Friday Night Videos.*

WAYNE KING (*invaluable assistance,* TP 44; *staff,* TP 67-78) is assistant editor at *Record* magazine.

DAVID FENICHELL (*staff,* TP 45-46; *distribution,* TP 47-51; *associate publisher,* TP 52-63) has worked for MTV and Time-Life video.

FRANK HOROWITZ (*marketing director,* TP 49-56; *consultant,* TP 57-63) is an account executive at Album Graphics Inc.

MARK FLEISCHMANN (*typesetting,* TP 55-57; *production,* TP 58-59) is associate editor at *Video* magazine.

FRED WASSER (*staff,* TP 73-77) is a film editor.

Marshall Crenshaw, Janice Blair, Lloyd Jassin, Joey Ramone, Lori Sowes, Mick Farren

I can't stand being in a room full of people who have taken drugs.
BRIAN ENO (1981) TP 61

I'm an extraordinarily bitter person.
ELVIS COSTELLO (1977) TP 24

It's very difficult to rise above the level of your own best clichés.
BILL NELSON (1981) TP 67

I've always been optimistic about life. I've not always been optimistic about my role in it.
PETE TOWNSHEND (1978) TP 28

Life is a joke. There are only a handful of things in my life that I can say I'm really glad I did.
JEFF BECK (1975) TP 10

We paved the road for bands like Duran Duran. We might even have helped Culture Club get accepted more quickly, at least in the area of strange hairdos.
MIKE SCORE of A Flock of Seagulls (1983) TP 89

A Flock of Seagulls are just Genesis with moronic haircuts, aren't they?
TERRY HALL (1983) TP 91

I feel degraded to compete with a lot of the music that goes up the singles charts.
JOHN ENTWISTLE (1978) TP 33

Let's just say I like singles 'cuz they're cute.
JIM GREEN (1975) TP 10

We don't want to sound discomforting or unsettling or make people feel uneasy.
DAVID BYRNE, on Talking Heads (1976) TP 14

I think kids are bored enough that if they got a chance to hear my music, they'd like it.
CAPTAIN BEEFHEART (1981) TP 58

I have lovely shoulders, knobbly knees, good balls, a terrific vibrator, a false hand and five pairs of identical trousers, three cats, fifteen tape recorders. I like girls with brown hair, Chinese food, and rock music.
BRIAN ENO (1974) TP 6

If Roxy Music were starting now, perhaps we'd all be playing keyboards.
PHIL MANZANERA (1982) TP 74

If all the things that happened to me when I was little had happened when I was a lot older, I'd probably be dead by now.
LENE LOVICH (1983) TP 87

If the records weren't free we'd be rating cheeseburgers.
TROUSER PRESS (1978) TP 32

BILL NELSON

AUTODISCOGRAPHY

Two faces has Bill Nelson. In the '70s he was the stereotypical guitarslinger in Be-Bop Deluxe, a forward-looking but essentially traditional rock group. As a solo performer he uses synthesizers and modified guitars to fashion individualistic, largely instrumental "modern music." His current reputation as a radical, artsy trendsetter is quite removed from Be-Bop Deluxe's misconstrued image as a sort of Deep Purple with science-fiction pretensions. If Nelson has never regained the level of commercial success he achieved as a guitar hero, he seems far more content pleasing his wandering muse with nouveau pop, audio experiments and theatrical scores. (Film soundtracks are a professed ambition.)

Besides being signed to a major label (Portrait/CBS, previously Mercury), Nelson has the "luxury" of his own record company: Cocteau releases the remainder of his efforts and singles he produces for other groups. No studio dilettante, he's overseen recordings by A Flock of Seagulls, Gary Numan (recollections of whom are too unhappy to print), the Skids, Units, Fiat Lux (another bad memory), Nash the Slash and others. As session musician, Nelson has played with Monsoon and Yellow Magic Orchestra's Yukihiro Takahashi, with whom he also toured.

*After a quiet spell, Nelson's career is on an upswing: A mini-album of instrumentals (**Savage Gestures for Charms Sake**) came out on Cocteau almost simultaneously with **Vistamix**, a Portrait compilation drawn from his solo career. For all his ambitious plans, Nelson—charming, witty and articulate—didn't mind returning to the dawn of his career.*

Be-Bop Deluxe's story has been well documented. This autodiscography therefore focuses on Nelson's solo work—before and after his stint as a bandleader.

INTERVIEW BY IRA ROBBINS

EARLY DAYS

In the late '60s there was a tiny recording studio in my home town of Wakefield [England]: a two-track machine in a guy's bedroom. He was a student teacher; at the college where he taught there were several people who played music and wrote songs.

One day I happened to be walking past the studio and heard some West Coast underground music. That was unheard of in Wakefield in those days, so I knocked on the door and found out it was this studio called Holyground. I talked to the guy, and he found out that I and a friend, Ian Parkin (who wound up in the first Be-Bop Deluxe), also played, so he asked if we would come down one night and sit in. We got roped into helping out, playing acoustic guitar and such.

Two albums, **A to Austr** and **Astral Navigations** [both released on Holyground] were done with that setup. They weren't my songs. It was simply a collection of guys who got together in different combinations. They didn't perform live; it wasn't a fixed group.

I had a band around the time of **A to Austr** [circa 1969] called Global Village—a three-piece blues/psychedelic band. There is a record, which is incredibly rare, by that group: We had three lacquers pressed up of an EP, one for each member of the group. My singing sounds like a four-year-old, so high and tiny.

NORTHERN DREAM (1971)

[Nelson recorded this solo album at Holyground. It was released on his Smile label in conjunction with the proprietors of the Record Bar, a local shop. Although essentially a one-man show, Richard Brown added drums and a little keyboards.]

A couple of years previous, I'd been involved in a gospel band. I met Richard through that; he was the church organist. His father was pastor of the church, but Richard was a real raver. I formed Be-Bop Deluxe with Richard—it was going to be our project—but his wife forced him to stop playing. It was a shame, cause he's one of the most talented keyboard

Joseph Sasfy, Ted Carroll, Roman Kozak, Andrew Jakeman, Caroline Prutzman, Curtis Roberts, Bruce Bauman.

Godlis

players I've ever heard. He did some gigs with Be-Bop Deluxe before we made any records.

Northern Dream was the first bunch of songs I'd written *as* songs. Also, apart from the very limited edition Global Village record, it was the first time I'd sung. I'd sung onstage with club bands, but not lead.

At that time I was a local government officer in Wakefield, working for the county hall. I wrote songs on my lunchbreak, whenever I could get away from my desk. It was a pretty boring job; that LP was the result of it.

I used to sneak off in the afternoons on the pretext of going to one of the other departments. Then I'd hang out at the Record Bar and check out the imports. The original 250 copies of **Northern Dream** were sold locally. Betty Brombie, one of the shop's owners, has repressed **Northern Dream** so many times since and has sold at least 20,000 over the years. I've not seen any money from it. I think the record is great for what it was: a diary entry. I'm quite happy with it, but I don't listen to it.

To this day I don't know how, but a copy got to [BBC DJ] John Peel. We got a letter from him saying his copy had got destroyed in the sun or something, and could we send another. So we sent it, and he began playing it on the air a lot. EMI heard it and contacted me, literally two weeks after I'd formed Be-Bop Deluxe [with Brown, guitarist Parkin, bassist Rob Bryan and drummer Nicholas Chatterton-Dew.] EMI wanted me to rerecord **Northern Dream** in a 24-track studio. I was totally against the idea because now I had a band and wanted to move on.

[The original Be-Bop Deluxe had recorded two songs at Holyground: "Teenage Archangel" and "Jets at Dawn."] I took a tape of the songs down to EMI in London. A man called David Croker—who was the one who wanted me to sign—liked it, but felt we should work at it a while and then come back. We put out the single on my label, Smile, in the meantime.

After a few months, EMI decided to come up and see us live, at Leeds. They liked us, but thought we were just a local phenomenon. We finally got a concert lined up at the Marquee in London, supporting String Driven Thing. The audience went bananas. The head guy from EMI was there. He came straight back to the dressing room and said, come to my office tomorrow and we'll do a deal.

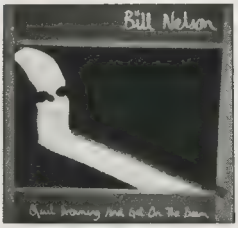
Red Noise:
SOUND ON SOUND
(1979)

I'd already started writing songs for Red Noise when I broke up Be-Bop. Likewise, the songs I'd prepared for the next Be-Bop album (had there been one) were some of the songs that wound up on the Red Noise album.

I never felt the album was that difficult to listen to, but the reaction was awful. People, especially DJs, didn't know how to take it. We lost our US record deal; EMI in England was taken over by Thorn, and their policy changed.

I don't think **Sound on Sound** was a mistake. It was necessary. The good thing was that when I toured England with Red Noise we didn't play any Be-Bop numbers. The things I've been doing the last few years would have been impossible without my making that solid break.

Red Noise had to stop simply because we lost the record deal. Suddenly everything stopped dead, as far as getting money from record companies. We tried a few places, but it was the start of the depression in the record industry, and everybody was very wary. Nobody would stick their necks out, because we were too far ahead of our time.



QUIT DREAMING AND GET ON THE BEAM; SOUNDING THE RITUAL ECHO
(1981)

I recorded **Quit Dreaming** just after **Sound on Sound**. It was going to be the next Red Noise album, even though the same people weren't involved. EMI wouldn't release it, and it sat on the shelf.

It was a great trauma for me. For so many years I'd been recording in studios, and had more success than I'd ever dreamed of—and here I was without anybody giving me money to go in a 24-track studio. I kept asking myself, "What have I done wrong? All I've done is follow what I believe; is that wrong?"

I ended up sitting in front of my little four-track at home doodling, making little instrumentals, which I really liked doing. When **Quit Dreaming** finally came out, it included a bonus album, **Sounding the Ritual Echo**, with some of those things.

The demos I'd done for **Sound on Sound** actually sounded better than the album—not in recording technique, but the arrangements. I'd always played everything on the demos myself, even through the Be-Bop stuff. The band would be given their parts on tape and add a few elaborations. So I thought, why not take that approach and do it all in the studio?

EMI was going to release **Quit Dreaming** until they heard it and didn't understand it. I wanted to keep Red Noise always in flux and moving forward so the only thing people could expect was change.

Mark [Rye, Nelson's manager] and I bought three tracks—"Do You Dream in Color," "Mister Magnetism Himself" and "Atom Man Loves Radium Girl"—from EMI and started Cocteau. That was all we could afford. That was the first release on Cocteau, during the interm period [between **Sound on Sound** and **Quit Dreaming**], and that got more airplay than anything since "Ships in the Night." It was instrumental in getting Phonogram's attention.

Certain tracks on **Quit Dreaming** I can't listen to that much. I was trying vocal approaches that were kitsch, fun and a little off the wall. I've become a little more honest about my voice.

"Living in My Limousine" was about a Rolls Royce I had just bought, but that went a long time ago. My money situation's been terrible over the last few years; I'm up to my neck in debt. When I split with my management company—Arnakata, who managed Be-Bop—I found out they'd done a terrible amount of bad business handling with my money affairs. They liquidated and I can't get anything; they had my publishing as well. I've yet to see a piece of paper that tells me how much money I've earned in America, either from record sales or publishing. My business affairs have been so badly handled. I owe the taxman a fortune at the moment. It's made me very bitter about the business end of things.

DAS KABINETT
(1981)
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
(1982)

I worked very closely with the Yorkshire Actors Company on the music to their production of *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari*. They developed the play simultaneously with my developing the music.

They'd improvise a particular scene over and over until things started to click. I'd time it and make notes, then go away and spend a couple of days doing that 10 minutes of music. Then I'd take it back for a run-through and make adjustments. It was very laborious, and took ages.

I hadn't planned to release an album; it was just going to be a tape which they would use on their tour. When it was finished, and I saw the play for the first time with the music, I had to put it out; it was worth more people hearing it than would only see the play.

Beauty and the Beast was done slightly differently because they were sticking very rigidly to Jean Cocteau's screenplay. I had a video copy of the Cocteau movie which I watched a lot at home so I could do things a lot quicker. I worked out huge chunks of the music at home, working from the script they gave me, and the film. I wanted to make certain references to the original soundtrack as a gesture of respect, so I transposed some techniques into a more modern idiom.

Beauty and the Beast is very pastoral, very much in contrast to **Das Kabinett**. I saw [the latter] as a training ground for making film music—my big ambition at the moment. When you're huge in rock 'n' roll, people ask you to score movies because your name is good publicity. But often the music has nothing to do with the movie whatsoever. I need to get my work in a form that I can send around to a few people, like David Lynch (one of my heroes), and see how they react to it.

THE LOVE THAT WHIRLS (1982)

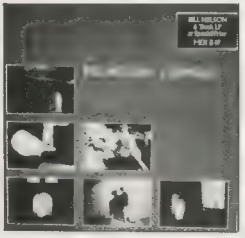
This took **Quit Dreaming** a stage further. On that record I demo'd all the songs at home, then took them to the studio and recreated them. Here I had the opportunity to create in a 24-track studio. I would go in with no idea whatsoever, sit down with the drum machine and program it until something happened, get a sound together and bounce off that to add a keyboard part. Then I'd take a cassette of that back to my room and sing along to it; then go back to the studio and take it a little bit further. The songs were constructed a bit at a time.

"Empire of the Senses" was a demo that went back to Red Noise but was never used. The song was about trying to liberate yourself from your senses controlling everything you do; it also was inspired by the Japanese film *In the Realm of the Senses*. "The October Man" is probably the best self-portrait I've done so far. A lot of strange things happen to me in autumn.

FLAMING DESIRE AND OTHER PASSIONS (EP) (1982)

"Flaming Desire" was a single in Britain; the other tracks were left over from sessions for **The Love That Whirls**. This was a way of getting rid of them, really. (The English 12-inch of "Flaming Desire" includes some of these tracks.)

I had so much material left over from **The Love That Whirls** that I was trying to find ways to get it out of my system and let people hear it. We put out 12-inchers, 7-inchers with an extra track—I've lost track of how many. I know there was enough for nearly three albums when I finished **The Love That Whirls.**



CHIMERA (1983)

I started work on **Chimera** in 1982; the original idea was for it to be out in November of that year. Because of various commitments—I had to go to Japan for five weeks to work on the Yellow Magic Orchestra album, **Naughty Boys**, and I was producing other people—I didn't get a chance to finish it until early 1983.

Chimera was to be an intermediary release between **The Love That Whirls** and the next official album in 1983. But it came out late, and then my contract with Phonogram came to an end. They were going to renew it, but we wanted better circumstances.

The biggest influence I've had of late has been from working with YMO. Those guys wipe the floor with most of the musicians I've ever met. On "Acceleration," the bass line (which is Moog bass) is very much like some of YMO's things, not in notes or tempo but in style.

Chimera and **The Love That Whirls** are my two favorite albums of everything I've done. They show me finding myself, which takes a long time; there are so many things to try in my world. I feel I can stand by those two records because they have a lot of meaning for me in the lyrical content. With those two records I came to grips with the ideals I'd had for a while, trimming away the things that weren't necessary.

I'm not a synthesizer player; I wouldn't dare get up onstage and play keyboards. If one hand's down on the left end of the piano and the other's on the right, they get completely lost. But in a studio situation I can take my time and experiment. It's like playing with building blocks, trying something out a bit at a time. It's quite a painful process, and something I don't like people watching me do.

Guitar is the only thing I can play, really. I've been coming back to guitar; there's probably more on **Love That Whirls** and **Chimera** than anything I've done since Be-Bop. But it's E-bow guitar, which I've also used an awful lot on my performance pieces. My next album should come back to more guitar—acoustic guitar. Being in a synthesizer band now is like being in a heavy metal band.

SAVAGE GESTURES FOR CHARMS SAKE (1983)

[Nelson's latest offering is a mini-album of instrumentals released in the UK on his Cocteau label.]

VISTAMIX (1984)

The tracks were basically chosen by committee; my own favorites probably wouldn't make a very commercial record. I'm putting some faith in "them." I suppose it gives an overview of some of the more commercial things. It's not coming out in England.

OTHER PLANS

I've got four albums coming out in a boxed set. It's all instrumental music recorded at home: 95 pieces of music, three years' work involved in the lot. It's coming out on Cocteau in a limited edition of 3,000 copies, all hand-signed and numbered.

One of the albums is a re-release of **Sounding the Ritual Echo**. One side of **Chamber of Dreams** is a selection of backing tracks I improvised during the Invisibility Exhibition [*a multimedia show in London*]; the B-side is incidental music played between acts. An album called **Pavilions of the Heart and Soul** is about eros and sensuality. It's meant to be music to make love to, very sensual and delicate. **A Catalogue of Obsessions** is a ragbag of everything that didn't fit into the other concepts. It's very tongue in cheek, full of nice, absurd song titles.

I originally wanted to include **Beauty and the Beast** and **Das Kabinett**, which are now unavailable, in the box as well, but it made the price a little too extreme. We may re-release them as a double-pack in the future.

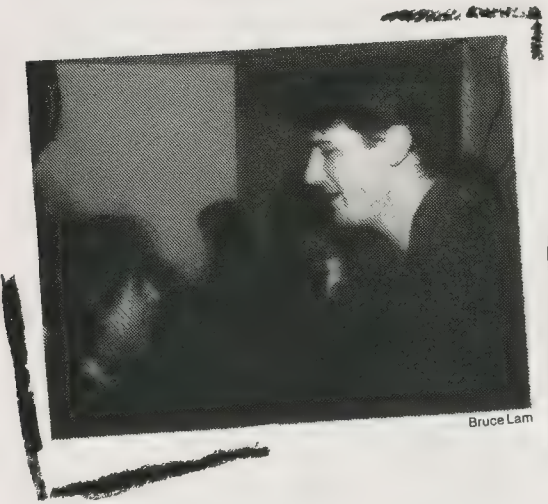
I'm going to put together a band and tour. I did a tour with Yuki [Takahashi] earlier this year and got a taste for it again. But I don't want to do it forever. I'm guarding against it going back to being-a-band-and-making-records. There's so much more to be done. ■

Andrew Lauder, Louis K. Robbins, Estelle Robbins, Susan Clary, R. Meltzer, Savage Pencil, Danny Cornyetz,

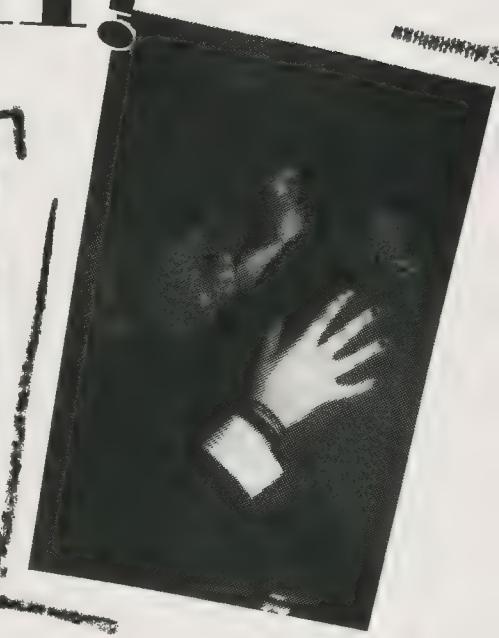
I DON'T WANT YOU, HAROLD. SCRAM! I WANT THE BUZZCOCKS, PARTS ONE, TWO, THREE. IT'S THEIR LAST 3 SINGLES ON ONE EP. CASSETTE, TOO! SO BUZZ OFF, DWID!
NO PROBLEM, YOU WORM! I'D RATHER HAVE THE CRAMPS, BAD MUSIC FOR BAD PEOPLE. IT'S THEIR GREATEST HITS PLUS UNRELEASED STUFF, AND IT'S ON CASSETTE, AS WELL. SO KISS MY HEELS, BIMBO!
CRAMPS
Bad music for bad people
THE CRAMPS SP 70042
BAD MUSIC FOR BAD PEOPLE
1 2 3
BUZZCOCKS SP 70507
PARTS ONE, TWO, THREE
I.R.S.

hey good lookin'!

Spandau Ballet go for the gold



Bruce Lam



By Howard Druckman

It's a half-hour to showtime, but the crush at the stage of Toronto's Massey Hall is already deep and intractable enough to draw several beefy bouncers. A thick crowd, dominated by clutches of oh-so-fashionable girls, retreat reluctantly to their seats. Ten minutes later, they rush the stage again; a mild wave of dry-ice smoke has been taken as a cue for the band's appearance.

By the time Spandau Ballet has finished an hour-long set of funk 'n' soul, dozens of squealing teenage girls have stormed the stage in search of a souvenir limb or two. The palookas from security have had about as much luck preserving the dignity of the staid old auditorium as they have in keeping Spandau's elegant faces from being clawed, pawed and otherwise mauled. Several unfortunate young fans have been carried out on stretchers, having fainted in the crush.

"If we'd done three nights here, we'd have got more of our cross-section in the audience," Spandau guitarist/songwriter Gary Kemp says a few grey days later. "But these kids are the first to get to the ticket counters, and it sold right out. Kids go to concerts and appreciate you on a 'cute' level, but at the same time you get a slightly older crowd who appreciate you on all the different levels you can appeal on: music . . . philosophical . . . whatever.

"In the '70s," he continues animatedly, "if you were an album band you were 'serious' and you never had screaming girls around. If you were a singles band, you had all the screaming girls but you weren't 'serious.' But in the '60s you had that cross-section in the audience and you could do both. In the '80s, you can do both. We've had a number one single and a number one album at the same time."

That much is **True**: Spandau Ballet's third album rocketed to number one in Britain, and has gone Top 20 in Canada and the US, where it's spent half a year on *Billboard*'s Top 100. The single "True" went Top 5 in all three nations; its follow-up, "Gold," is climbing American charts with a predictable bullet, having already swept through Europe.

Kemp's defense to the contrary, the temptation is to dismiss Spandau Ballet as mere teen idols. The vanguard of the sentimental British "soul" crooners—Paul Young, ABC's Martin Fry, Spandau's Tony Hadley—are breaking adolescent hearts with an image of True Romance, backed to the hilt by fashion. They're not pandering to lust like the '60s hedonists (e.g. Mick Jagger), or turning on the sexless charm of the late-'50s teen idols (e.g. Fabian). They're doing it like Frank Sinatra did with his bobby-soxed followers 40 years ago—with style.

Style is what Spandau is all about. Four years ago the group emerged from London's ultra-fashionable Blitz club, which cronies Steve Strange and Rusty Egan (who later formed Visage) opened as an alternative to the prevailing scene. Another mate, Steve Dagger, styled himself a manager and brought the band to the stage. The timing was right; the media were jumping on the cresting music/fashion bandwagon labeled "new romantic."

"The Blitz has done more than the Cavern ever did for rock music," Kemp asserts. "Before then there was no clubs, really. Discotheques were naff places and rock clubs were dated. The fusion of the two brought club culture—not Culture Club, although in the end it brought that as well—to Britain. It is enormous, the biggest thing to hit the nation."

Prime exponents of that culture, Spandau Ballet was one of the first white bands to release their funk on 12-inch dance mixes designed for clubs. "Chant No. 1," with an irresistible chorus ("I don't need this pressure on") and driving beat, established them as a solid dancefloor groove. "Instinction" and "Paint Me Down" cemented that reputation.

Then there were the pioneering videos: an edgy Soho dance club sequence for "Chant," a mini-epic filmed in England's lake district for "Musclebound," and the sexually charged, almost ritual imagery of "Paint Me Down." Now there's the simple but elegant "True" video, and a slickly crafted clip for "Gold."

But to Kemp, the "new romantic" scene was more than the dedicated followers of fashion. Kids were making their own flamboyant clothes and aligning themselves passionately with new bands. It was a working-class revolution via the only available means: Dress up in classy second-hand clothes and gain a proud new identity. Pledge allegiance to your favorite band's style.

"Britain is probably the poorest country in the west, apart from the Latin countries," Kemp says. "Because of that, and its high working-class population, it tends to instigate a lot of new youth movements. That works itself directly into music. If you go to Paris and ask a kid who he is, he'll say 'I'm a socialist' or 'I'm a communist.' In England he'll say 'I'm a soul boy' or 'I'm a punk.' He sees himself connecting with that youth culture.

"When a person likes a band, it's not just for the music. It's because he sees himself in what that band's saying and how they look. Kids in Britain don't have any money, so they have to have something they can connect with and promote themselves with. They haven't got material things, but they've got themselves and their pride. Their next pedestal is to look at kids in bands."

Kemp may have climbed that pedestal to the high-style image, but he's very much a working-class boy, one of the lads. He talks through a thick British street-kid accent that recalls Paul Weller. Like the former Jam mainman—another success trying not to lose his roots—Kemp is a pop music theoretician and armchair revolutionary. He's eager to explain his well-meant but vague socio-political-working-class-dance-funk-fashion principles. He holds, for example, that Spandau's stylish conceits reflect their audience's fashion obsession.

"A band should at all times be contemporary, and should never try to dictate fashion upon its audience. It should be like a sponge that soaks up influences and reflects them back. Like the Who, for example: In '66 they were mods, in '69 they were hippies. They never thought up those two trends, they were just reflecting it back."

But Kemp has it all sussed out. He knows you've got to have an all-powerful image in this video age. That's what youth culture kids will identify with.

"In the '60s, kids grew up with the wireless, never had television. But I grew up with TV, in a visual world. The bands of today are multi-media bands, and have to be to survive. In the old days, all a band had to do was play; a producer would capture that sound and put it on vinyl. Now there are three art forms you have to be good at to survive: video, recording and playing live."

Naturally, Kemp has no truck with the argument that video limits viewers' imaginations by locking in one set of images to be continually recalled upon further listenings.

"I think it *expands* people's imaginations," he says. "People never thought visually like that before. Now, when they listen to the radio the first thing they think about is what the video will look like. They start thinking of all the possibilities, where before they just whistled a tune and that was it."

Bill Nelson, Andy Ferguson, Lenny Kaye, Ed Handi, Fred Bangerter, Ken Tiddick, Barbara Nellis, David Standish

Ken Sitz, Jim Sullivan, Ted White, Bill Hern, Robert Smith, Aftonbladet, Patrick Mathe, Dave Sheridan, Michael Searles, Eric Hoffert, Adam Auslander, Robert Downey

MARTIN KEMP, JOHN KEEBLE, TONY HADLEY, GARY KEMP, STEVE NORMAN

In fact, the coming of MTV was instrumental in fostering the visual "revolution" that allows bands like Spandau to prosper. Unlike radio, MTV welcomed British bands because they had the videos. Hence the exposure of American kids to new styles and fashions. MTV's impact forced American radio to open up to "new music." Spandau Ballet was ready, with a dancefloor reputation, visual clout and the **True** album.

True is a collection of love songs rife with contradictions and ambiguities endemic to the condition. The title cut is a luxuriant gush of the soul which resonates throughout the album: lush orchestration, simple arrangements, backing vocals and chord structures indebted to Philly soul, and blue-eyed crooning to put Boy George to shame. The album is intimate and occasionally optimistic, if somewhat spongy. It sounds like Spandau Ballet did indeed listen to Marvin Gaye all night long. . . notepads at the ready.

"**True** is about the difficulties of communication between people," Kemp says. "It started off with a few personal songs: You're never honest to your partner and it ends up all going wrong because of that. Then I realized I was being so cryptic in the lyrics—I didn't want to be *too* honest—that the problem was also between songwriter and audience." Which is why he sometimes finds it hard to write the next line.

And Marvin? "I wrote that line because I thought of 'True' as a soul song. Marvin would sing, 'I'm flying on a jet plane to my baby, oh yeah.' And a boy and girl might be sitting on a sofa listening to that song, and they'll remember that moment for a long time. But the lyrics don't mean nothing to them. But if you say, 'Do you remember listening to Marvin Gaye all night long with your partner,' they'll remember that and think, 'Yeah, I got a real buzz from that.' It was sort of turning it on its head to make it more relevant to 16-year-olds."

Can Spandau Ballet turn enough American 16-year-olds into fashion aesthetes to keep from "losing our bottle," as Kemp puts it?

"Well," he says, "Some of the most stylish kids in North America are the black kids in Harlem, and they have the least money in their pocket. But they don't follow bands, they follow themselves, which is probably a better way.

"America, in fact, has instigated all these youth movements, but they're black, and white Americans have never been willing to buy it. Maybe because of their social status, white kids in England see what's happening, whitewash it and sell it back. We play ping-pong across the Atlantic.

"But even the more affluent American kids have a desire for their own pop culture, which they've been deprived of for a long time. It's not for the same reasons as in Britain, but it's the same self-pride. In the last few years there's been a vacuum in America for music. The bands are so old, and kids don't want to buy the same record as their moms and dads. They want a band their age.

"The English bands fit that because they're young, they've got more energy, they're doing things that are different. As soon as a kid sees a band like that on TV, he can say, 'Hey, this is my band. I really like that group, they look great.'"

I leave Kemp in his dreary but costly hotel suit to philosophize through another half-dozen interviews. Later, as day drifts into night, I pass a record store where Spandau Ballet is signing albums. The sidewalk is jammed with fans. Gaggles of girls cry out occasionally as they glimpse their soon-to-be-actually-touched heroes through the window. Two cops hold the line, one guards the door, and another tells me not to walk in the street, though there's no other way to get by.

Kemp and Spandau may be more than teen idols, but they're surely something less than cultural revolutionaries—at least so far in America. They know what they're doing, and probably so do the young fans. But one has to wonder how long a relationship based on looks alone will last. ■

Keith Sluchansky, Tim Sommer, Fred Wasser, Barry Taylor, Leo Sacks, Mitch Maller Andy Childs, Kris Needs

David Gilmour of Pink Floyd does an "About Face."

"About Face." A new solo album featuring the voice, guitar and songs of David Gilmour.

Ten new David Gilmour originals. Including the single, "Blue Light," with Steve Winwood* on organ. Plus "All Lovers Are Deranged" and "Love On The Air," co-written by Pete Townshend.

David Gilmour.
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The STAB of Love

ABC Sees The World And Gains Social Consciousness

By Parke Puterbaugh

Within the same week, this writer has interviewed both ABC and Yes. If it's not quite rock from A to Z, it's at least rock from A to Y, alphabetically speaking. Both groups have employed the services of producer Trevor Horn, and there does seem to be a similarity between Yes' stop-start megahit "Owner of a Lonely Heart" and some of the more breathless tracks on ABC's debut album, **The Lexicon of Love**.

Thinking this a fitting way to break the ice, I mention my recent audience with the elder group to the members of ABC, who are definitely not impressed.

"Are they vibrant fellows?" queries singer/leader Martin Fry, the barest trace of a smile playing across his face.

I've hardly uttered the adjective "laid-back" when the room erupts in laughter and hooting. When it dies down, sax player Steve Singleton fixes me with a dyspeptic gaze and says, "We basically want to wipe out people like Yes." Then they're all looking at me.

In person, the members of ABC are a far cry from the clothes-make-the-band attitude of past publicity photos. While hardly dressed for deer-hunting season, they no longer look like they stepped off the pages of *GQ*.

There are encouragingly human qualities about their appearance. Singleton has crooked teeth. Fry could profit from an application of Clearasil. Guitarist/keyboard player Mark White looks a bit like Wally Cleaver's bohunk friend, Lumpy. And none of them evidently has slept well in weeks.

But ABC has good reason to be feeling their oats. **Beauty Stab**, their second album, is picking up airplay around the country, despite a general critical razzing. Their next record is already in the planning stages. Last of all, the holidays are looming—'tis the season to be jolly, and all that.

"Basically, we're just over here for a promotional visit," Fry says, "a chance to do some Christmas shopping and chew the cud with as many journalists as wanna talk to us."

Trouble is, most of those journalists want to grind an axe, not chew the cud. **Beauty Stab** is quite a change from **Lexicon**, that shimmering dissertation on the nightclubbing singles lifestyle. Instead of the galloping gallant in gold tuxedo, the singer examines the world in the cold light of day. Guitar, not very prominent on the first album, cuts through the new songs like jagged glass. **Beauty Stab** is steeped in disillusion—with romance ("Love's a Dangerous Language"), the mother country ("United Kingdom"), greed ("King Money"). The most positive message is "Hey Citizen!"'s call to alarm.

Fry's retort to charges of thematic disparity between the two LPs appears to be "That Was Then but This Is Now," an anti-nostalgia rant that kicks off **Beauty Stab** in no uncertain terms.

"Less fantasy and more fact," is how Fry describes it—"a return to real subjects rather than dreamland, rather than this paradise we wanted to imagine on **The Lexicon of Love**."

He leans forward, the better to make a point, as he warms up to the subject. "**Beauty Stab** is different in climate from **The Lexicon of Love**. It's still ABC but it's got very different, uh, desires. We wanted to make something that was a little more abrasive and potent, that was kind of ugly and beautiful at the same time. We wanted to broaden the spectrum; we didn't want to write songs about 'the day my baby left me' the rest of our lives."

White leans in now. ABC's primary melodist says the band decided to break new ground "partly because **The Lexicon of Love** is fairly definitive in what it did. You really couldn't take [it] any further."

Doesn't seem to have stopped a good many bands from milking *their* formulas over and over. "I'm far too much a gentleman to say that myself," White laughs.

Fry is less diffident. "There's many a one-trick pony in the bargain basement and at the top of the charts."

"That's why it's strange," Singleton adds, "when people say to us, 'Why have you changed?' like it's some sort of sin, like we've broken some unwritten rule."

A world tour expanded ABC's horizons in more than a literal sense. The band played 80 or so concerts throughout four continents.

"We've seen a lot of different people and a lot of different places," Singleton says. "That changes your perspective on the place you originally came from. It changes your view of the whole world, really."

Fry himself eventually grew dubious of ABC's conspicuous posturing as he circumnavigated the world. Onstage, the band would wear gold lame tuxedos—as did the road crew. At tour's end, Fry symbolically deposited his gold suit in a trash bin. When ABC reconvened last summer to compose **Beauty Stab**, lyricist Fry was in a different turn of mind altogether.

"Traveling the world made us realize that all the stuff we learned in 21 years, 23 years, about Britain being the center of the map was pretty much baloney," he says. "We found out that people are basically the same. They function the same way, they're excited by the same things. Flags

Lisa Anderson, Will Birch, Jane Hamburger, Del Taylor, Susan Whitall, Steve Lorber, Philippe Manoeuvre.

STEVE SINGLETON, MARTIN FRY, MARK WHITE

and customs and nationalism are like cherries on the blancmange—it's just cosmetic, just a dividing line.

"Traveling taught us that maybe the United Kingdom wasn't quite as opulent as we thought. In fact, it's pretty impoverished; there are a great many things that could be changed and made better."

ABC has never had a bass player. They used to have a drummer, David Palmer, until he left before the recording of **Beauty Stab**. This is a fairly unusual arrangement for an outfit with such dance-club clout, but ABC prefers it this way.

"The group is so much the three of us," Fry explains. "I see a beauty and positive virtue in being able to operate with different musicians. It means we don't have to have a slapping bass guitar or a particular drum sound as our trademark. We can do songs with or without a rhythm section. We see it as an advantage."

For **Beauty Stab** ABC enlisted bassist Alan Spenner and drummer Andy Newmark, two much-in-demand sessionmen who have also served as Roxy Music's rhythm section—a fact not lost on critics who consider ABC Roxy copycats.

"It may have been an outside rhythm section," White says, "but we formed a group, really, and that's the way we tried to work. We rehearsed before we did the record, and we were a group—ABC was a five-piece group—for the period we recorded the material right through to the end."

Any chance of Spenner and Newmark, or some other rhythm genies, permanently joining the band?

"It would be nice," White says, "but it's a dream. I can't imagine the world's best bassist and drummer working for the sort of wages we offer."

Don't expect ABC to tour again soon; they're not packing their suitcases until the third album is in the shops. The plan is to write and record it in New York, then tour toward the middle of the year.

"We're following our own instincts," Singleton says. "We instinctively want to make a third album. Therefore, when we do play live, we'll have three albums' worth of material and it'll be a great show."

Will the band reinvent itself as drastically on its third LP as it did on **Beauty Stab**?

"I don't know, we don't really 'reinvent' ourselves like David Bowie or Isaac Newton," Fry replies. He knits his brow contemplating the precise implications of the word.

"No, 'explore' is a better word. Making music and writing songs can be an adventure. It doesn't have to be a safe bet. At the same time, we see **Beauty Stab** as a direct extension of **The Lexicon of Love**. Maybe when we release five or 10 albums, people will see a thread that extends through all of our stuff. The spirit of the band will shine through."

One thing's for certain: The playboy idyll, the romantic-erotic dancefloor *pas de deux*, is a thing of the past.

"We got tired of the dance-music cliché," Fry confesses. "It's just as bad as the new-music cliché." ABC, he maintains, is "more ready to face the facts, to face reality. We realized that you can't, you know, go around veiling yourself. We've canceled our subscription to the Club Tropicana." ■

Mike Lembo, Ken Adamany, Jessica Falcon, Karen Schlosberg, Jon Young, Steve Grant, Bob Payes, John Leland.

THUNDER DOWN UNDER

By Cary Darling

There's been an enormous hubbub about Australia recently. It seems you can't glance at a magazine cover or lounge in front of a Merv Griffin theme show without seeing some dazed koala entering an altered state through the use of eucalyptus leaves, or Men at Work singer/guitarist Colin Hay's multi-directional eyes.

Leading the assault on American consciousness have been Australian film and music. The latter took priority when Men at Work pole-vaulted the Pacific in one apparently easy leap. Despite their success, the essence of the Australian scene, and why it is producing such vital music, remains largely unexplored.

Australia and neighboring New Zealand are home to a variety of feisty independent labels that encourage experimentation. Both countries have active pub scenes, encouraging musicians to play live and not become studio-cocooned "artists" who go into shell-shock when confronted with an audience. Australia is also one of the few places left where progressive radio, in the old-fashioned sense of the word, survives.

True, the economy has put the squeeze on a lot of smaller labels; many venues have staged their last show; and it remains to be seen how long some of the more open-minded radio stations can last with poor ratings. That these factors exist at all, though, influences the style and verve of antipodean rock. After all, Joy Division's "Love Will Tear Us Apart" went to number one in New Zealand, something that didn't happen even in England. Prince broke in Australia with **Controversy** long before being accepted in other territories.

EASYFEVER AND OTHER ASSORTED ILLS

Before diving headlong into life beyond Men at Work, it is necessary to understand the past. Australian rock didn't begin with "Down Under" or even Helen Reddy's "I Am Woman." British and American critics often fail to grasp that, while many antipodean acts have shamelessly aped European or American trends, others occupy a parallel course where trends emerge simultaneously.

The Saints, for example, were one of Australia's punk exports during the discord of 1977. Their "(I'm) Stranded" single was released at the same as the Ramones' first album, and two months before the Sex Pistols' "Anarchy in the UK." Radio Birdman's ear-grinding debut, **Radios Appear**, followed soon after. Australian punk, shortlived though it was, was on its way.

Before that, Australia and New Zealand took art-rock and glitter-rock, added their own peculiar touches, and gave the world Skyhooks and Split Enz, respectively. In the mid to late 1960s Australia endured a bout of teen hysteria called Easyfever, induced by the Easybeats. Led by George Vanda and Harry Young (now Flash & the Pan), the Easybeats gave rock one of its best working class anthems in "Friday on My Mind," a Top 20 US hit in 1967.

In this country, the Easybeats were a one-hit wonder. Other bands from Australia's mod/psychedelic era—Running Jumping Standing Still, the Twilights, the Vacant Lot, the Loved Ones, Masters Apprentices, among others—didn't even make it to the starting gate. In the '50s, Australia had its very own mock Elvis Presley in Johnny

Mark Corcoran

O'Keefe, billed as "the Boomerang Boy" in the US; it didn't help. (Ironically, he died within a year of Presley's death.) Australia also shared in the brief '50s revival in the early '70s with acts like Daddy Cool and Ol'55.

Good as any of these acts were (and are), few dealt with down-home topics. This brings us back to the present, when Australian and New Zealand bands are treating the world on their own terms. American, British, and other influences are still there (*Rock Around the World*, a program on Australian public TV, shows videos from non-English-speaking countries), but incorporated into their own value system.

BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL

One of Australia's most fiercely iconoclastic, staunchly *Australian* bands is Midnight Oil. Leader Peter Garrett—six-foot-five, and with a gleaming bald head—trained as a lawyer but decided to put his intense feelings about political corruption, creeping corporatism and public apathy into music.

Like Radio Birdman and the Saints, Midnight Oil emerged in 1977 in a splatter of aggressive guitars and drums. The band has since matured beyond the rugged primitivism of its self-titled debut album, and now reinforces scalding politics with deft musicianship and increasing lyrical complexity.

That maturity can be heard on Midnight Oil's first American (fourth Australian) LP, **10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1**. The record balances the sonic explosions of "Only the Strong" and "Read About It" with the touching, post-apocalyptic "Scream in Blue," an anthemic "Tin Legs and Tin Mines" and rhythm-crazy "Power and the Passion." Vehemently Australian lyrics aren't jingoistic, but offer insights into domestic trials and a piercing view of international politics from a removed vantage point.

ABORIGINAL AND MAORI ROCK: WE WERE HERE FIRST

Australia's aborigines are often compared to America's blacks or Britain's West Indians, but there are several differences. Aborigines form less then one percent of the population, and many still live in a rural environment or on reservations; their effect on mainstream Australian culture is minimal. Further, the aboriginal notion of rhythm differs wildly from European and African norms.

However, a few aborigines are starting to make a name for themselves in the pop arena. Reggae, with its message of a black deliverance from "white Babylon," influenced a group of Adelaide aborigines to start No Fixed Address. They were featured in a low-budget film, *Wrong Side of the Road*, which also had the more rock-oriented yet still aboriginal US Mob.

The soundtrack to *Wrong Side of the Road*, No Fixed Address' first major record release in Australia, was somewhat underproduced. A subsequent EP, **From My Eyes**, is a more interesting and better-produced slice of aboriginal anger.

Billy Inda, who plays didjeridoo (the difficult aboriginal woodwind) in No Fixed Address, also guested on a single by white, folk-influenced rockers Goanna; "Solid Rock" is an ode to Ayers Rock, an aboriginal holy place. The song was a big hit in Australia and even nudged into the American charts last year.

The Warumpi Band, four aborigines and one white, play country and rockabilly (!), and are currently making more waves than No Fixed Address. Hailing from the isolated central Australian settlement of Papunya, the Warumpi Band was inspired by American films like *Rock Around the Clock*, which are shown regularly on such settlements. Their debut single, "Jailangura Pakarnu," received much critical acclaim. Gigs in Sydney were reportedly phenomenal.

Across the Tasman Sea in New Zealand, the Polynesian Maoris are better integrated into the general culture. Still, there has been a similar ethnic awakening. The Herbs are a Maori band who meld reggae and Polynesian music into one easygoing yet energetic lilt. The lyrics on their two releases, **What's Be Happen?** (EP) and **Light of the Pacific** (LP), have deep New Zealand roots, even if the music comes via Kingston.

MAY 1,000 FLOWERS BLOOM

The Herbs' name refers to a certain plant beloved of Rastafarians everywhere. Another strain of antipodean pop harks back to a time when a generation began to discover "better living through chemistry."

The premier Australian psychedelic band is the Church, a Sydney quartet fronted by Steve Kilbey, whose lyrics connote a pastel sensibility. Capitol Records released **The Church** in the US in 1981 without much fanfare, and passed on the following brilliant **Blurred Crusade**. A succeeding EP (**Sing-Songs**) and album (**Seance**) weren't as well-sculptured. Still, the Church remains one of Australia's most popular bands, and could resurface in America on another label.

The Sunnyboys work similar territory, but with a harder, less romantic edge. Two albums on the Mushroom label, **Sunnyboys** and **Individuals**, approach the spirit of '60s Detroit rock. But the ragged guitar licks are offset by vocal harmonies and optimistic lyrics.

The Sunnyboys contributed one song, "Discipline," to the A&M/Oz **Maiden Australia** compilation. They recorded their last album in England, so they may be heard from in the US shortly.

INDEPENDENTS DAY

Considering the small populations of Australia (15 million) and New Zealand (3 million), independent labels have been remarkably successful there. Or maybe it's *because* of the small population that independents there can attract attention without the crippling financial outlay it takes to sneak into every corner of the American market.

The best-known indie labels are centered in Melbourne. The largest, Mushroom (home of Split Enz), has established a separate arm, White Label, for more experimental bands (like Hunters & Collectors and the newest electro-sensation, Kids in the Kitchen).

The Missing Link Records logo found its way onto turntables in the US and Europe thanks to the Birthday Party. Au Go Go Records, started by Bruce Milne (a co-founder of *Fast Forward*, the world's first cassette-fanzine, now defunct) has the Scientists' post-psychedelic thrash, and the dark Moodists. Both bands have relocated to England.

Up in Sydney, Phantom Records ("The Big Beat in the Heart of the Vinyl Jungle") holds its share of the market with a mail-order and retail business for rare Australian records from the 1950s, '60s and '70s. The other half of Phantom is a record label whose roster includes the Shy Imposters, Flaming Hands, Le Hoodoo-Gurus, Surfside Six and the Cockroaches. Most of the Phantom bands have a fun, '60s edge, and disdain much of the artiness of their Melbourne cousins.

Hot Records in Sydney has made a name for itself with the Warumpi Band, the Gondwanaland Project (Charles McMahon's attempt to merge didjeridoo and synthesizer), the Iggyesque mayhem of Celibate Rifles, and the modern bang of Soggy Porridge.

M Squared has released a lot of "noise" music over the past few years: Pel Mel, Scattered Order, the Makers of the Dead Travel Fast, and Wildlife Documentaries. Similarly-styled Terse Records has the Severed Heads, Negative Reaction and the Slugfuckers. [*But is it art?—Ed.*]

The radical SPK, of "Metal Dance" fame/infamy is originally from New Zealand. Now in England getting rave reviews, the group is on SST/Thermidor in the US.

The three leading New Zealand alternative labels are Flying Nun, Jayrem and Propellor. One of New Zealand's best bands, Blam Blam Blam (who made an EP and album before flying apart), were on Propellor. Their song "There's No Depression in New Zealand" is a classic work of passionate power pop. The label also had the '60s-oriented Screaming Meemees.

Jayrem offers a broader base of styles, from electro-dance (the Body Electric) to mainstream rock (Precious) and pop/R&B (the Neighbours). Flying Nun has the Clean, an enthusiastic pop combo whose **Boodle Boodle Boodle** has been imported into the US.

New Zeal from New Zealand

Thanks to Murray Cammick, editor of the excellent New Zealand rock monthly *Rip It Up*, we've obtained a closer listen to that country's independent scene. These small-label releases of the last couple of years are quite in contrast to the more mainstream or voguish groups who have achieved international exposure.

AVANT GARAGE: music LP (Unsung, 1983). Avant Garage expands upon usual rock instrumentation with a cello, bassoon, tuba, trumpet and flute—nine people in all. Consequently they resemble a symphony orchestra on acid, or a Frank Zappa band peopled by Juilliard students. Goofy, artsy lyrics meet jagged compositions; for all the virtuosity involved, this is one boring piece of work. Only devotees of the not-so-sublimely ridiculous will have patience for the collegiate self-importance.

BIG SIDEWAYS LP (Unsung, 1983). "Big" is the word: Twelve musicians, including seven songwriters, employ horns, guitars and percussion to fuse rock, jazz, funk and local ethnic music with idealistic lyrics. The result is an upbeat, diverse album—intelligent, highly arranged but definitely not slick.

BUILDERS: Beatin Hearts LP (Flying Nun, 1983). A literary punk band? The 17 songs here match typically downcast subjects ("Inquest," "Dirty & Disgusting," "Accident") with equally bleak guitar rock. Singer/leader/multi-instrumentalist Bill Direen is not without character, though, and his Verlaine-like guitar ramblings are a welcome diversion. Soft songs use reedy organ effectively; other touches—whistling, viola, harmonica—stave off tedium.

CAR CRASH SET: "Outsider" b/w "Fall from Grace" (Reaction, 1983). Synthesizer duo (abetted on one side by their producer) makes straightforward electro-dance-rock. This 12-inch is catchy and insistent, with a good beat and muscular production.

THE CLEAN: Yet Another Clean EP (Flying Nun, 1982). Semi-acoustic psychedelic trio with a silly sense of humor and winning way with lightweight flower-power sounds. The seven cuts divide into an "easy listening, laidback side" resembling Television's happier moments, and an "uneasy, crazy, paranoid, schizophrenic, frantic heavy side" of garage-rock and antsy Syd Barrett-esque starkness. Recorded on a 4-track in someone's dining room, the sound isn't bad; neither is the band.

FETUS PRODUCTIONS: Fetalmania EP (Flying Nun, 1982). A weird blend of scratchy guitar, prominent percussion, disquieting noises and disembodied vocals—sort of Residents gone dance-rock, or Tuxedomoon with a down-under accent. There's enough structure and melody to atone for obnoxious imagery and forced strangeness. Songs gallop along nicely; upside-down production makes for an original sound that recalls the Beatles' worst psychedelic excesses.

MILTOWN STOWAWAYS: Tension Melee LP (Unsung, 1983). Funky bass, choppy guitar, smooth horns and strangled vocals make the six-man Stowaways a challenging proposition. Political lyrics are right-on but not preachy or contrived. Not my idea of fun, yet a neat band with lots of divergent ideas that sometimes connect impressively.

TALL DWARFS: Canned Music EP (Flying Nun, 1983). If R. Stevie Moore were two people, he might sound like Tall Dwarfs, a duo that uses acoustic and electronic instruments, sound effects and simple tape tricks. This mini-album is odd, unpredictable, charming and mostly unpretentious. A treat for eccentrics.

3 VOICES LP (Unsung, 1983). Similar to Big Sideways, but this one-off big-band project takes a more abrasively modern approach. There's lots of bleating, some vocal polyphony, a touch of shuffling reggae and even some near-rock. Well played and produced, but only sporadically engaging.

—Ira Robbins

Discount Records, Robert Fripp, Academy of Music, Jeff Peisch, Eno, Dick Doherty, Uncle Floyd, Kevin Markowski

Many of the bands signed to independent Australian labels have gone on to strong cult success in England. The Go-Betweens' **Before Hollywood** LP was lauded by British critics, as was the Laughing Clowns' **Laughter Around the Table**.

SYNTHETICS

Australia, and to a lesser extent New Zealand, likes its rock beefy. Slick arena acts like Journey, Styx and Rush don't sell particularly well down under. Antipodean rock emphasizes muscular guitar, be it in the post-punk bray of the Birthday Party, the power rock of Midnight Oil, or the literate working-class rock of Cold Chisel. Synth-pop hasn't passed Australia and New Zealand by, but its roots are certainly less deep than in Europe or the US.

The first wave of down-under synth-oriented bands heard in the US were Icehouse (originally Flowers) and the Reels. The latter are still largely unknown here, though their **Quasimodo's Dream** LP is one of Australian rock's epic moments.

Icehouse has built a sizable following over the past three years. Leader Iva Davies recently scored Russell Mulcahy's feature film *Razorback*. David Bowie asked Icehouse to open several shows for him in Europe.

Real Life seemingly came out of nowhere (actually Melbourne) to manage a huge Australian hit with "Send Me an Angel," which also went Top 40 in the US. The quartet has taken some flak at home for sounding "too British." Their debut album, **Heartland** (MCA/Curb), does reveal a British synth-pop influence, though it's not nearly as cloying as much of that country's output.

Oz Records, A&M's subdivision for Australian music, is pinning its hopes on the Expression, originally from Perth and now based in Sydney. A self-titled debut album has just been released. Machinations, also on Oz, had people dancing to "Presure Sway" all last autumn.

Epic Records has resurrected Mi-Sex, a New Zealand-via-Sydney sextet who hit the American dance charts four years ago with "Computer Games." After their **Space Race** album stiffed, Epic washed their hands of them but now seems interested again: **Where Do They Go?** has just hit the bins in the US.

Whether US Polygram will pick up the Dugites, who record for their Australian counterpart, is open to question, but they definitely should. Their single "Cut the Talking" fuses synth, horns and guitars into a powerful whole.

R&B/SKA/REGGAE REVIVAL

As in the US and England, there is a keen local interest in R&B and R&B-drenched versions of ska and reggae. Sydney's Allniters, a ska band, took their version of Bobby Bloom's "Montego Bay" into the Australian charts last year. The James Brown-inspired Dynamic Hepnotics released their "Hepno Beat" single on Statik in England.

Jo Jo Zep (alias Joe Camilleri) has moved from his barn-burning brand of sweaty R&B and ska to a suaver brand of pop which has been compared to Kid Creole. Even with three US LPs (two on Columbia, the most recent, **Cha**, on A&M/Oz) to his credit, Jo Jo Zep languishes in stateside obscurity.

Australian Crawl's **Sons of Beaches** came and went in the US in 1982. The band gets a better welcome back home: **Semantics**, a reggae/funk-enlivened EP, went to number one. They also have a live LP, **Phalanx**.

In New Zealand, D.D. Smash slays audiences with a heady mixture of R&B, pop and pub jazz. The irrepressible Dave Dobbyn fronts the group. Other acts in this category are Speedboats, the Double D's, the Champions and Strange Tenants.

SOMETHING TO DO IN 1984

While we're all waiting to see how many of George Orwell's fantasies become reality, we can expect domestic releases from the following bands this year:

MODELS: When is a synth-oriented band not just a synth-oriented band? The Models' **Pleasure of Your Company** is a lively mixture of voodoo rhythms and surreal imagery. The LP and its single, "I Hear Motion," were surprise hits in Australia. The band is on Mushroom and could emerge here through that label's A&M/Oz connection.

EUROGLIDERS: Just signed to CBS internationally, the Eurogliders possess an erotic tension, much like Canada's Rough Trade. Another band working a similar vein is Do Re Mi, who have yet to sign to a major label.

DEAR ENEMY: Produced by Peter McIan, who brought us Men at Work, Melbourne's Dear Enemy indulges in a similar kind of expertly played pop. The group has just released its debut album, **Ransom Note**, on Capitol.

ILLUSTRATED MAN: Also on Capitol, this group features members of Supernaut (a mid-'70s Australian band) and former Gary Numan sidemen.

PSEUDO ECHO: They opened for Duran Duran in Australia and soon after went Top 10 with their single, "Listening," on EMI Australia. They could easily do the same thing here with their commercial dance-pop.

PAT WILSON: The wife of Ross Wilson, (a living legend of Australian rock—he was in Daddy Cool and is now in Mondo Rock), her first single, "Bop Girl," is a bubbly pop song Toni Basil might like to try. The accompanying video was directed by Gillian Armstrong, known for *My Brilliant Career* and *Starstruck*.

COCONUT ROUGH: Along with D.D. Smash, Coconut Rough is one of New Zealand's leading intelligent pop bands. Their first single, "Sierra Leone," was among the country's better offerings in 1983. Like D.D. Smash, they could see release here via A&M/Oz.

ANGELS: Known in the US as Angel City, this quintet has released two albums on Epic. Their melodic/hard style mixes American bombast and British working-class rock, with their own Australiana thrown in. A perennial native pub/concert favorite, the Angels are now on MCA here.

DRAGON: Originally from New Zealand, now based in Australia, Dragon was huge in the mid-'70s, before the punk revolution blew them into oblivion. Now signed worldwide to Polygram, they've re-emerged in a big way with a 45, "Rain."

These probable releases are in addition to new offerings, current material, and any repackages/compilations which may spring from Split Enz, Little Heroes, INXS, the Divinyls, Ignatius Jones, Mental as Anything, Heaven, Phil Judd, Rose Tattoo, Moving Pictures, Wendy & the Rocketts, Monte Video, and Sharon O'Neill.

So there *is* life after Men at Work after all. ■

Ben Manilla, Danny Beard, Peter Dyer, Bert Muirhead, Adam Finn, Wolfgang Doebeling, Disco Boy, Ed Hanel,

SUBURBS in the city

TODAY, MINNEAPOLIS—TOMORROW, ST. PAUL

By Jim Green

Your honor, it's like this: See, I'm up in the wee hours one morning this winter. I'm flippin' my boob tube dial at random and up pops *The Joe Franklin Show.* Just like you'd expect, there's Joe, smilin' and tellin' these two women guests how much he admires whatever it is they do, and they're smilin' and tellin' him how much they admire whatever it is *he* does.

Then this other guest speaks up and I go "Whoa." I know him: He's a DJ from a real hip New York station that plays only whatcha call "new music," y'know, with dance beats and synthesizers and stuff. But he's all spiffed up, like with a sports jacket and skinny tie and this weird short haircut—like what I seen in magazines, who say it's a style called "SoHo chic."

So anyways, what he's sayin' brings me up short: somethin' about how all the newest and bestest "new music" is comin' outta England, nothin' from here. Then he adds somethin' like, if there really *are* American bands doing stuff that's new and exciting, they should come outta the woodwork and *tell* him about it. Sheesh! I was so fed up I turned the channel and almost gagged to see Peter Allen and Roberta Flack doin' a duet on the theme from the movie *Arthur.*

Now, your honor and th' jury might not 'a' heard about the Suburbs—the rock group, not the place—but this know-it-all DJ shoulda known. They're as American as you and me—from Minneapolis, yet! They're with a big record company, and they're just *great!* They *deserve* to be noticed and cheered! I was completely *justified* in sendin' that jock a bag o' cow chips, don't you think, yer honor, sir?

Imaginary court testimony, but based on a true incident—the Franklin show, not the cow chips (though I was tempted). My first thought on writing about the Suburbs was that I was making a plea, arguing a case. Bands in this country simply don't have the major label and chart access of their British counterparts. There are loads of American groups deserving attention and not getting it.

One of those underexposed American groups is the Suburbs, a so-called "new music" band from the heartland that's capable of turning out stunning '80s rock with wit, grit, range and power—even (gasp) commercial potential. They're fully on a par with, if not superior to, most of the *crème de la crème* of Britannia's most-praised and best-selling exports. Further, the Suburbs are (finally) signed to a major label (Mercury) experienced in marketing "new music." This outfit clearly could make its presence felt coast-to-coast and beyond if only given the chance. So far they haven't even dented the Top 200.

Are the Suburbs the greatest thing since sliced Beatles? No. And maybe my effusion is due to guilt over not taking them seriously enough in the past. Still, when I hear the title tune from the Suburbs' recent **Love is the Law** LP, or other tracks from it like "Rattle My Bones," "Skin" or "Hell A," all thoughts of overcompensation go out the window. And when I think of how much I enjoyed seeing them play live. . .

That was a breakthrough. All too often bands that please on record disappoint on stage. But given a no-frills set-up at New York's Ritz, the Suburbs performed their songs with genuine exuberance. They were engrossing, exhilarating and *fun*! I was positively giddy, lost my cool and grinned ear-to-ear. So what's wrong with being a fan?

Minneapolis, 1977. Commercial designer turned lead guitarist Bruce C. Allen became part of a quartet known (by a very few) as the Tse Tse Flies, thereby making the acquaintance of drummer Hugo Klaers and bassist Michael Halliday. The three soon realigned themeslves as the Suburbs with singer/guitarist Blaine John ("Beej") Chaney and singer/keyboard player Chan Poling. Their first proper gig was ringing in 1978 at a New Year's show in a downtown Minneapolis gay bar.

In mid-1978 the Suburbs became one of three precocious Twin Cities bands (with the Spooks and Fingerprints) to issue vinyl debuts on the newly-hatched Twin-Tone

Linda Walker, Pearl Lieberman, Chris Salewicz, Dave Robinson, Laura Kaufman

Ebet Roberts

Chan Poling, Hugo Klaers, Bruce Allen, Beej Chaney and Michael Halliday case New York.

label. On their EP the Suburbs sounded somewhat like a middle-American analogue to early Wire (remember them?), only unable to take themselves as seriously as Wire did.

The band's following "World War III" 45 in 1979 brought minimal notice nationally but virulent response locally (spray-painted "Suburbs Sucks" graffiti) for its anti-war sentiments. The first Suburbs album, **In Combo** (1980), elicited a few rock-crit cheers and little else.

In Combo was essentially recorded live in the studio; only vocals were overdubbed.

"To us it was, 'Don't you just turn on the tape recorders and we play?'" Chaney recalls, sitting quietly in the lobby of a New York hotel. "I think [Twin-Tone co-owner and producer] Paul Stark thought that's how we should do it for our first record, being the kind of band we were."

What kind of band? The tune "Drinking" was typical of the early Suburbs' "raw, spontaneous" approach.

"It was written and recorded on Bruce's birthday, during the course of about an hour and a half of partying. It wasn't going to be on the record, but we started jamming, thought it was cool, turned on the recorder, got the basic track, and just sang about drinking—while we were drinking."

The Suburbs' next album, the two-record **Credit in Heaven** (1981), was their idiosyncratic way of vinylizing that lifestyle.

"**Credit in Heaven** represents a couple of years of live shows and a lot of traveling," Chaney says. "We did it as a double album because we felt that all the material is valuable for that era of our band, even weird songs like 'Girlfriend' and 'Spring Came.'" (Very few of the songs *aren't* weird in one way or another.)

"If we didn't get them on tape then, we never would, so we put 'em on. It didn't really matter to us whether people liked all of those songs or not. They were gonna be there, in our encyclopedia of Suburbs music."

By touring the band was accreting a national reputation. One night they might be minor notables playing to 600 people, then move on to the next town and be total unknowns serenading a crowd of six.

"I kept up hope," Chaney recalls. "I knew, I had faith, that we could get a big record company to take us seriously.

"There were a lot of times when it went through all of our minds: Are we ever gonna get out of this ghost-band cult-level thing? Are we ever gonna get beyond printing five or ten thousand copies of our records at a time—one or two for each town in the country—and maybe some reviewer will think it's great, but so what? People will try to buy it and they won't be able to find it. It was like trying to sell a Christmas card you've designed yourself.

"'If this is all the exposure we get,' I thought, 'how long's the band going to be able to hack it, being totally broke? How long are our friends and families gonna support us in this insane mission?' It was pretty depressing."

That feeling started to influence the Suburbs' music. Fortunately, at this time the band's blossoming talent attracted Steven Greenberg, a pivotal character in the Suburbs saga. You may not recall the name, but can anyone forget "Funkytown," the 1979 platinum disco hit he masterminded in the guise of Lipps Inc.?

Greenberg, a Minneapolis native, knew a couple of the Suburbs casually. He attended a mixdown session for **Credit**, during which he heard "Music for Boys," and asked to produce a dance version.

"He saw our stuff as being a step further than the disco he was doing," Chaney says, "rockin' dance music with some off-the-wall subject matter."

In mid-1982 the extended remix of "Music for Boys" began its nearly four-month spell in *Billboard*'s dance charts. The Suburbs were itchy to forge ahead.

Roman Szolkowski, Joel Webber Klaus Kastenskold, Miriam Kuznets. Fran DeFeo, Jay Paquette, Eric Blumberg.

Even before **Credit in Heaven** was released, its music was beginning to sound old to the 'Burbs. As "Music for Boys" started getting extensive night-club play, the band was preparing to sell themselves to industry bigshots via a demo tape of four new songs—the eventual **Dream Hog** EP.

Los Angeles seemed a sure bet for a stake-out. The city's influential KROQ-FM was hot on "Music for Boys"; the Suburbs hadn't played there for some time; and they hoped to find heavyweight management to interest the large record companies. The Suburbs left for a summer sojourn.

Their stay proved less than idyllic. Los Angeles blazed under 100-degree heat, and the band got no firm commitments from managers or record companies. Enter the Dream Hog.

"We were hanging out in our shabby hotel on Sunset," Chaney remembers. "One morning I open my eyes and there, staring at my face on the bed, is this fuzzy blue pig. Our sound man had bought it and placed it there."

They called the toy mascot the Dream Hog and set it on top of the refrigerator.

Thoroughly discouraged, the Suburbs returned home to find that Greenberg's management was ready to take them on. Moreover, several record companies were now distinctly interested by what they heard on the demo tape. Negotiations began to heat up; then, with renewed enthusiasm, the group grew impatient.

"The companies said we should finish the album, and then they'd probably sign us. The songs were already old hat to us, though, and we hadn't put anything out in a while, so we told 'em, 'Forget it. We'll put it out as an EP on Twin-Tone, then we'll write another whole album and show you that.'

"The record companies began thinking, 'These guys won't slow down for a second, so let 'em do it.' We did it, and 'Waiting' got into the dance charts. We'd done it again. Then the phone started ringing: 'We want the band.'"

The **Dream Hog** EP—its cover depicting the blue pig encircled in a guady pink wreath donated by Su Tissue of the Suburban Lawns (no relation)—did double service: The Suburbs' last Twin-Tone release was reissued by Mercury after signing the band.

And now comes **Love is the Law**.

"Originally I saw that [phrase] all over Minneapolis, on walls and telephone poles. I hear it's all over Europe, too, but I have yet to see it anywhere in New York."

Chan Poling and Chaney are the Suburbs' two main songwriters. Judging from **Love is the Law**, Poling draws a lot of inspiration from the street—from street writing, anyway. On the true-to-life title cut, the singer (Poling) has an epiphany courtesy of a wall graffito. The album's inner-sleeve lyric sheet notes that a 13-line verse of "Hell A" is "copied verbatim" from a Los Angeles phone booth. Poling confirms it was spied during the band's purgatorial stay in Hollywood.

"We were living in this hotel—I think it was a whorehouse. There's lots of hookers on Sunset Strip, and here we were, on the road for a long time, missing our, uh, sweethearts, and we wind up living with whores.

"One day it was raining—and hard, which is doubly weird for LA—and I saw this graffiti scrawled with magic marker all around the phone in a booth outside that diner on Sunset that's a converted railroad car. I went back to the hotel, got my notebook, and went back to the phone booth and copied it down."

The most striking aspect of **Love is the Law** to Suburbs-watchers is a feeling of hope (counterbalanced by humor) suffusing the group's customary themes of distress and despair.

"We *are* changing," Poling affirms. "The scene we came out of, there's so much nihilism and negativity; it was fashionable. Peace can seem a pretty schmaltzy thing when you're a teenager and want to smash things up, but after you've wrecked your own life for a while. . . I used to be that way, angry with the ignorance and meanness of people. A lot of art rock 'n' roll, especially punk, came out of being pissed off. But that's not the remedy—not all of it."

Call it a change of life: Last summer Chaney became the last remaining bachelor Suburb to tie the knot. (At the Ritz, he announced that "Accept Me Baby" is for his wife.) Two Suburbs are fathers—an "embarrassing" state of affairs, according to Poling: "Whenever I read about guys in bands who have kids and stuff, I think they're old." (Daddy Poling barely looks his 26 years.)

Back in Minneapolis, where the Suburbs once ruled the roost, local reviewers dumped on some of **Love is the Law**'s lyrics as naive or stupid.

"They didn't believe we were sincere," Poling says, "or didn't catch the gist of what we're saying in the songs. Maybe our attitude's unfashionable now. We don't want to come off as heavy guys who intimidate people."

Pride and sheer gusto keep the Suburbs fired up. For the tour just ended the band added two horn players, against their financial judgment. "We were gonna give ourselves a raise," Poling says, "but we said, 'Forget about it, we gotta have horns.'"

A *raise*? As in *salary*?

"Yeah. We take all the money we make, give it to our accountant, and salary ourselves. The rest goes to paying the bills. It's not much more than the minimum wage, but it's not too bad.

"I'm married with a kid, we have a nice place to live, a car, we get to travel, we feel good about what we do—it's a pretty good life. And still, there comes a day when I look around and think, 'These *idiots*, what are they doing to the world?' Our answer to it is, at least to some extent, to lighten up, have fun."

The future? If the past is any indication, the Suburbs will continue contending with industry VIPs who ignore or dismiss them out of hand. Perhaps if they were a little more—well, *commercial*. . .

"We've thought long and hard about it," Poling admits, "but we can't do anything like that, sell out. How do you know which way the wind's blowing?

"Besides, we're musically competent enough to reproduce the sound of, say, Toto—but wouldn't it be a nightmare if we did that and failed?"

No, the Suburbs will stick to their unique viewpoint. The recorded evidence is in, members of the jury. These guys deserve a favorable verdict. ■

Betsy Farren, Mike Dreese, David McGee, Wayne King, Joni Skoblar, Alison East, Binky Philips, Miki Zone,

. . . . . *Flash* . . . . .

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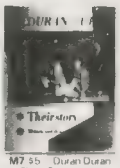

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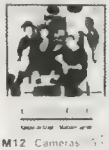
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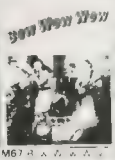

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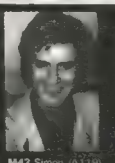
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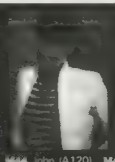
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surface noise

A Fine (Rock) Madness

Brian Ashley White

By Mick Farren

Let's start with a shameless play for sympathy. (God knows I'll probably need it later.) This past New Year's Eve was the first one I can remember when I didn't go someplace and get drunk. The reason was simple. I was sick as a dog. Cold, flu, laryngitis—you name it, I had it. Thus it was that the midnight hour found me swallowing antibiotics and watching two back-to-back Rolling Stones documentaries on Cinemax, the cable TV channel.

The first one was *Let's Spend the Night Together.* There's not much anyone can say about this predictable and fairly dull chronicle of the Stones' Fiorucci tour except that, by 1981, they were very big and very well organized. Keith looked good, Ron didn't, and Charlie Watts was reliable as ever. Jagger could actually walk unscathed among the crowd, which I guess is a sign both of the times and the Rolling Stones.

The second feature, *Gimme Shelter,* was the Stones' Altamont movie. There was no walking around in the crowd. Back in the sunset years of those fabulous '60s, Hell's Angels whupped on hippies with pool cues and people said "wow" a lot. The Glimmer Twins presided over the whole messy conspiracy like haughty, stoned-arrogant little lordlings of whom everyone wanted a piece.

Gimme Shelter reminded me how, in that oft-invoked decade, we spouted the most dopey and abominable clichés, and justified our chronic self-absorption by naively messing around with forces we hardly understood and couldn't control. The film also reminded that, then as now, there's a percentage of pop fans who are quite nuts—obsessive, anti-social and thoroughly crazy.

One scene toward the end of the movie: The Stones have taken the stage at Altamont, but rape and murder are still a shot away; things have yet to get completely out of hand. The cameraman probably wants me to watch the main drama of Stones and bikers, but my jaded eye is drawn to a fat woman a few rows from the front. She's stripped off her clothes and is looking for a beast of burden to hoist her up on his shoulders so she can look ecstatically stupid, wave her arms around and maybe get her picture in *Rolling Stone.* When she gets no takers she heads for the stage, slipping easily through the dense and demented crowd that prefers to part in front of her rather than press her cellulite.

She reaches the edge of the stage and attempts to climb aboard. The Hell's Angels push her back. Again she tries. They throw her back a second time. The people around her are getting pissed off. They look as though they hope the Angels will whack her with a pool cue.

Still, she has another try. The expression on her face is pure rock 'n' roll madness. She wants to be there. That's all that matters. She wants to stand beside Jagger and soak up the energy, the adoration, the *attention.* She's totally self-absorbed. Me! Me! *I want it!* Maybe she even thinks she somehow deserves it.

She doesn't consider that Jagger has gone through considerable tribulation to get where he is. She doesn't consider that maybe a quarter of a million people might not be interested in looking at saggy boobs. She's beyond reason—a fat, lunatic baby who only wants gratification, instant and massive.

But that was the '60s. Everyone was insane back then. Surely that kind of thing doesn't happen anymore.

The hell it doesn't.

A couple of months ago I reviewed Bob Dylan's **Infidels** album for the *Village Voice.* I regretfully expressed the opinion that it was distressingly reactionary in form and content.

The hate mail came thick and fast. One particularly inventive respondent called me the "Colonel Khadafy of rock critics." (I think it was supposed to be an insult, but I may use it on my letterhead.)

I am familiar with hate mail; when it's typewritten or even scrawled with a ballpoint, I don't worry too much. This Dylan review, however, brought one piece of mail that shook me up. It wasn't even a letter. Someone had simply ripped the page out of the *Voice* and attacked it with a red magic marker: slash, obscenity, slash. It was like getting a letter from Squeaky Fromme. That, and the face from 14 years ago in *Gimme Shelter,* started me thinking about the madness that lurks on the fringes of popular music.

At the most extreme, you have Mark Chapman and the Who crowd trampling each other in Cincinnati. But there are many others: the heavy metal kid smashing his head into the steel seat in front of him; the groupie outside a Manhattan nightclub, hysterical because she wasn't allowed *in there* with the rock stars; the crazies at the US Festival who developed the sport of throwing a bottle straight up in the air and watching whose skull got fractured when it came down. Slamming in the pit is a logical formalization of this same lunacy. On a more personal level, there was the kid we found passed out *inside* one of the Pink Fairies' p.a. bins; or, a few years later, the sucker who kept calling and threatening to kill me because of something I'd written about Jimmy Page.

There's a weird thread that runs through popular music. I call it the I-wanna-get-lost-in-my-rock 'n' roll syndrome. Parrrty! The jaw goes slack, the eyes glaze over; jerk, twitch, spasm, noises, drool even. Hit, punch, trample, smash, down on your face on the floor. It doesn't matter who gets hurt, you or them. Parrrty!

In this state, music becomes a one-way street, no longer communicating between performer and listener. It's vampire time. The music is used as a narcotic, an excuse for self-destructive, damaging or antisocial behavior. "Sorry about your face, man. I was grooving." Once again it gets down to "I want." I want to get out of it. I want to get crazy. I want—and I don't give a flying fuck how I get.

I have yet to witness a true '80s madness. Incidents like the US Festival or the continuous threads like hardcore are basically left-overs from the '70s. Modern rock-biz is so well protected, regulated and organized that it's hard to have an Altamont (unless you count Diana Ross in Central Park). Maybe Duran Duran is incapable of generating the same hysteria. Maybe today's youth are beyond madness. Somehow, I doubt it. ■

Marc Mayco, Terry Rompers, Robert Devereux, Al Clark, Karen Moline, Bob Enos, Linda Francischelli, Sam Goody.

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video

RUTLES

By Ira Robbins

The variety of rock videos commercially available in Great Britain continues to shame American output, but domestic software manufacturers are offering a steadily broadening range of styles, groups and video concepts. Also, as prices continue to fall, a videocassette is nearing the cost of an album rather than a turntable.

"Video" is unarguably the primo rock buzzword for the near future. Domestic video labels are caught up in the hype and expending some effort to insure their entree in the young adult market they keep hearing about as regards MTV. This quarter's crop of new releases, while not altogether commendable, show greater effort and creativity than most previous prerecorded rock tapes.

Making Michael Jackson's Thriller (Vestron, 60 min.) went "platinum" within weeks of its release this past December. (Until the end of 1983, "platinum" meant sales of at least 50,000 copies *and* retail sales/rentals worth $2 million; now the criterion is either 75,000 copies *or* $3 million in sales. "Gold" status is half that.) The 12-minute *Thriller* clip is ambitious, to say the least; Jackson enlisted some very pricey talent for this short story set to music. That the fancy special effects aren't scary is irrelevant: This is an Accomplishment. That the dancing isn't nearly as good as in Jackson's other videos doesn't matter either. His charisma and good-natured earnestness compensate. He's having a great time; not to indulge him is mean-spirited.

The rest of the cassette (i.e. most of it) is a series of backstage vignettes. Director John Landis (who may face charges in connection with the death of two children on the set of *Twilight Zone*) is the dominant figure: he comes off as a smug schmuck far more conscious of being on camera than any of *Thriller*'s actors or dancers. Makeup wizard Rick Baker is seen supervising Jackson's transformation into a cat creature. Costumers, technicians and choreographers also run through their paces. Jackson acts like he's in Disneyland for the first time. He's bought his fantasy and loves being in it, despite the discomfort and strenuous work involved.

What the documentary section will mean to an audience is hard to say. This behind-the-scenes stuff usually serves only to pad out a two-hour feature film slot on TV. But few of Jackson's zillion fans will complain. It's reassuring to see a big, sheltered star suffering a little indignity for his craft; there is a real person there, after all. Still, with little inspiration to guide it, *Thriller* just ain't what it's cracked up to be. The most impressive rock video yet? Sure, but there must be better ways to spend a million bucks.

The Prince's Trust Rock Gala (MGM/UA, 60 min.) represents one of the more useful aspects of rock video: to capture a unique event for the worldwide home market. This 1982 London benefit under Prince Charles's auspices—he makes a very foolish speech while awarding a prize to a reggae combo called Unity—offers an exceptional talent line-up. The show revolves around an all-star combo/backing group: Phil Collins, Pete Townshend, Ultravox's Midge Ure, Mick Karn (ex-Japan and Ure's occasional teammate) and Procol Harum's (!) Gary Brooker. (An unidentified second keyboardist looks like Barry Andrews but remains out of the spotlight.)

Ure's urgent guitar solo and Karn's fluid bass color Townshend's "Slit Skirts" and "Let My Love Open the Door." Ure's sensitive reading of Tom Rush's "No Regrets" benefits from Brooker's organ and Karn's jazzy riffing. There's even a nostalgic stroll through "A Whiter Shade of Pale."

Also on hand are Kate Bush ("Wedding List"), an energetic Robert Plant ("I Don't Know"), both backed by Karnurecolkertown, plus solo turns by Madness, Ian (ugh!) Anderson, Joan Armatrading and Unity. The only drag (besides Anderson) is a shambling ensemble finale of Sly Stone's "(I Wanna) Take You Higher" that never comes together.

Released theatrically in 1982 by Island Pictures, **Countryman** (Media Home Entertainment, 103 min.) is a beautifully photographed travelogue of Jamaica disguised as a flimsy tale of political intrigue. The B-movie plot finds the eponymous protagonist happening on the downed plane of two Americans. Their misfortune is used as evidence of CIA meddling by a corrupt colonel bent on kiboshing an upcoming election.

Forget the story, however (not to mention unevenly recorded and heavily accented dialogue); *Countryman* offers an armchair tour of rural Jamaica and its customs. Besides much gorgeous flora and fauna, there are casual glimpses of fishing, foraging and cooking; voodoo rituals; cockfighting; ganja smoking and trading; village life; commerce; education, etc. These scenes, though incidental at best, provide much of the film's charm. The charismatic "Countryman"—his screen billing—has supernatural powers in the movie, but is a natural on his own merits. Soundtrack reggae by Bob Marley and the Wailers (*Countryman* is dedicated to Marley), Wally Badarou, Lee Perry, Aswad and others links the fragmented episodes when no-

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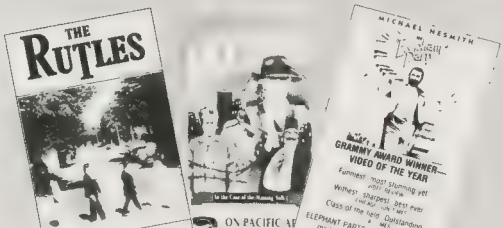

The Rutles
Firesign Theatre's "Nick Danger"
Michael Nesmith in "Elephant Parts"

Through the generosity of Pacific Arts Video Records, Trouser Press has acquired fifteen videocassettes to give away to our readers. To enter, send a postcard with your name, address, phone number and video format (Beta or VHS) to: TP Video Contest, c/o Pacific Arts Video Records, PO Box 22770, Carmel, CA 93922. You can enter as often as you like, but each postcard must be mailed separately. The deadline for receiving entries is **May 30, 1984**. Five winners drawn at random will receive three videos each. Decision of the judges is final; results will appear in the August issue.

Roberta Bayley, Jim Charne, Laurie Hutzler, Lloyd Isler, Sara Schoenwetter, Nick DeBenedetto, Rick Krieger.

thing else does.

I'm no fan of either the in-concert video format or the two featured performers, but there's something to be said for **Steve Miller Band Live!** (Thorn EMI, 50 min.) and **Thomas Dolby: Live Wireless** (Thorn EMI, 58 min.). Miller, who makes the occasional clever single, is dull as a doorknob in concert. He's deadly on his tape, which features all the hits you never asked for in perfunctory and unimaginative (ditto for his direction) treatments; at this Detroit stadium show, taped last year—the gig at which his live LP of the same name was recorded—the moribund Miller adds nothing to the studio recordings. Only two of a dozen numbers cut away from his motionless demeanor and dry performance shots, and then to still photos of the Miller Band down through the ages. Whatsamatter, did the cameraman fall asleep during those two songs?

Dolby has done precious little concertizing (none in the US) since hitting the big time. *Live Wireless* is a busy stage presentation framed by sepia-toned projectionist Dolby showing this concert "movie" to a theater full of patrons. The gimmick makes no sense but at least it shows effort and provides contrast.

Dolby is likable and earnest; indeed, his sincerity and wit are sometimes the only things carrying the show (although the backing band is good). Songs that were tedious on studio recordings don't improve much here, and Dolby's vocal pitch occasionally wanders. The tape's highlight is Lene Lovich, pointing up the star's inadequacies with her singing of his "New Toy." With all the props, projections and guest musicians—and some effective numbers, too—*Live Wireless* shows where concert videos might be heading. They're not quite there yet.

The Men in the Blue Suits (Instant Replay, 60 min.) is a video rock magazine produced by a Florida-based independent video unit. Using footage from stories shot while on assignment for MTV, this hodgepodge covers the Reggae Sunsplash festival in Jamaica (where Squeeze said goodbye), Eddy Grant, the Romantics, Joey Ramone in a speedboat, local faves Charlie Pickett and the Eggs accompanying images of the Miami riots, the Consumer Electronics Show and more. The nine feature "stories" aren't all captivating, and a half-dozen short reports are annoyingly minor. This unpolished first edition is hard to endorse; an imminent second issue promises a much more interesting line-up, including UB40, Lords of the New Church, Boy George and Thomas Dolby. And let's hope *The Men in the Blue Suits* stimulates similar enterprises. (Instant Replay, 2980 McFarlane Road, Coconut Grove, FL 33133.)

Blasts from the past: The Beatles are attacking the home video market on two fronts—directly, with **A Hard Day's Night** (Maljack, 87 min.) and indirectly, with **The Rutles** (Pacific Arts, 70 min.). The latter, a 1978 made-for-TV parody of the Fab Four saga, stars Eric Idle and Neil Innes (as bassist Dirk McQuickly and guitarist Ron Nasty, respectively), with appearances by Mick Jagger, Paul Simon, George Harrison, Bianca Jagger and numerous other actors and musicians. It's a bitingly funny pseudo-documentary; the characterization of Brian Epstein ("Leggy Mountbatten") is especially scathing. Such timeless musical non-classics as "Cheese and Onions," "Love Life," "Ouch!" and "I Must Be in Love," all written by Innes, add further "authenticity" to the proceedings. *The Rutles* is a treat to view whenever the funny bone (or some overly serious Beatlemaniac) needs some nostalgic tweaking.

A Hard Day's Night increased the Beatles' international renown and spawned numerous imitations in film and television. Two decades after its 1964 premiere, the movie's wit, poignancy and spirit have long outlasted the era's innocence and the Beatles' phony ideals. The video follows last year's theatrical re-release version in opening with a new prologue, made up of period stills, to accompany "I'll Cry Instead"; the song was written for the film but vetoed by director Richard Lester. No matter how familiar you are with *A Hard Day's Night*—it's certainly been shown enough on TV—you probably want to own a copy. Now you can refresh those dusty memories whenever the mood strikes. So where's *Help!* and *Yellow Submarine*?

Another theatrical release revised for its video version is **This Is Elvis** (Warner, 144 min.). This odd but effective blend of documentary and staged scenes, with off-camera narration by Presley soundalike Ral Donner, has been elongated for the home market with "42 minutes of footage not seen on TV." The extra scenes (all real-life clips) join an already abundant collection of top-notch Presley film and tape. Shots of El performing, meeting the press, traveling, partying and suffering indignities at the hands of imbecilic TV stars compensate for the creepy dramatized segments. If you want the whole story—such as can be crammed into two-and-a-half worshipful hours—this is a good place to see it. By using as much real footage as possible, and fleshing out the film with reenactments only where needed, *This Is Elvis* enhances as well as recounts the Presley legend. ■

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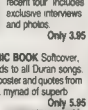

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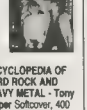

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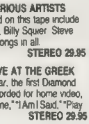

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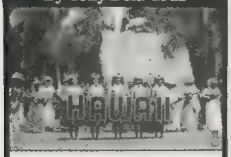
By Tony Dela Cruz



How about a punk rave-up on the "Hawaii Five-O" theme? **Battery Club** does just that, and also wins the bottom-line-in-romance award for "You Owe Me a Fuck." Joining Battery Club in the hardcore class here are **Sharx**, a TSOL/Dead Kennedys cover band; **Fallout**, a Clash soundalike composed of Revolutionary Communist Party members; and **Slamming Room Only**, who cover Circle Jerks and TSOL.

A full pendulum swing away is **Ratls**, devoted to Shakespearean chivalry. For Rasta and psychedelia in one, try **Brainchild**, described locally as "reggae with a hemorrhage."

The conceptual breakthrough comes from a reggae-tinged rock band called **Bobo Handshake**. Bobos is a student group registered at the University of Hawaii as a religious fraternity; to be "bobo'd" is to be wasted and broke. A "bobo handshake" is an unexpected kick in the balls.

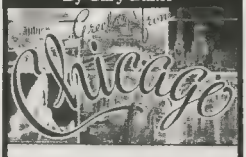
Flip *that* coin over and you get **Communique**, a trio of mods from prestigious Punahou Academy—anti-Bobos.

Then there are the devotees of reggae and African pop—**Crucial Youth**, **Movers** and **Pagan Babies**—and popsters like **Mumbo Jumbo** and **The Hat Makes the Man**.

Revolucion has been drawing steady crowds for three years at the Wave-Waikiki. It recently underwent mitosis and became two bands, the second called the **Solution**. The earlier version of Revolucion, with salsa band **Picante**, cut a soundtrack for a Curt Mastalka film *Full Blast*. ■

Tony Dela Cruz is arts editor of the University of Hawaii's Ka Leo O Hawaii.

By Cary Baker



Chicagoans in new music circles can sample a lion's share of new talent—so much so that growing factionalism within the scene eats away at anyone's moment of glory. The twain shall never meet among fans of the **Effigies** and **Phil 'n' the Blanks**, and who from either "camp" takes time to savor Chi-Town's vast blues, jazz and folk reserves?

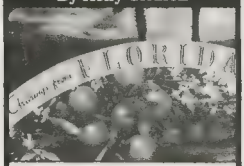
But notable bands continue to multiply. Two fanzine *kinder* from suburban Barrington calling themselves the **Reverbs** decided synths and postures had little to do with rock 'n' roll. Their well-crafted post-garage demo (shards of Fleshtones, R.E.M., Mitch Easter and Shoes) got local radio exposure, and the duo has inked with Detroit's Metro America label.

Nicholas Tremulis is Chicago's answer to Defunkt's "punk/funk/junk/jazz" marriage. The Euro edge of **Ministry**, laboring on a second Arista LP, lives on in the **Way Moves**, who occasionally sound like Japan and won unlikely kudos from Jonathan Richman.

Two groups of "immigrants" have gained momentum as Chicagoans. Lawrence, Kansas' **Get Smart** is a trio of strong writer/singers with a muscular, political, yet somehow packageable musical assault. Another trio, the **Book of Lies** from Lincoln, Nebraska, wonderfully overextend each member's contribution on their "Cryptic Memo" LP.

Naked Raygun uses hardcore punk as a point of departure on its "Basement Screams" EP. The **Bonemen of Barumba** combine Third World syncopation with hardcore sensibilities on their EP, "Driving the Bats ►

By Holly Gleason



Although Florida is viewed as a cultural wasteland, the new music scene is flourishing here.

Two compilations yield an arresting overview. "We Can't Help It, We're from Florida" on Gainesville's Destroy Records features 15 tracks from **Sector 4, Hated Youth, Rat Cafeteria, Morbid Opera** and **Roach Hotel**.

Dania's Jetterboy Cassette's "Jukebox Cassette Compilation" has 12 artists, among them **Crank, Gay Cowboys in Bondage**, the **Spin Outs, Larry Joe Miller, Charlie Pickett** and the engaging **Cichlids** (who broke up but have reunited as **Nouveau Reach**).

Morbid Opera's EP, "Jesus Loves You, So Give Us Your Money," besides having the title of the year, is garnering significant alternative airplay.

Local darlings **Sleep of Reason** were represented on the syndicated *Newsweek FM* radio show. **Charlie Pickett and the Eggs**' "Live from the Button" received critical acclaim from *Billboard*, among others. Pickett's "Overtown" video is on the West Coast video show *Media Blitz*.

Best of the rest: "Meat Parade" by the **Happiness Boys**, "½ Punx/½ Skin" by the **Menstrual Cycles**, and the ambitious "Mongrol le Gon" LP by the **Spanish Dogs**. Add releases by the Spin Outs, the incorrigible Gay Cowboys in Bondage, and **Larry Joe Miller and the Rockabilly Rockets**, and South Florida seems progressive indeed! ■

Holly Gleason writes for Performance, The Grapevine *and* In Record Times.

By Don Howland

The question you gotta ask when dealing with the New York underground is which one? The scene is composed of lots of small and rarely overlapping circles.

The art-damaged Lower East Side bands have probably made the most ruckus of late. Standard bearers **Sonic Youth** are even a genuine headline attraction. The group finished a big year with a trip to England, where their back-to-the-audience antics and ultra dense troubled *pfthunk* went over well.

The **Swans** spent 1983 exploring the limits of unlistenability, and released "Filth," an LP of monotonous, room-clearing sludge. Fortunately, only the largest home system can approximate their live sound.

Soviet Sex has a six-song EP of urban, whining and sometimes catchy punk funk.

Ten Hail Marys trample folk conventions in a more straightforward punk rush, while the **Bag People** are aggressively quirky. Also spazzing away: **Health Hen, Live Skull,** and punk crossovers **False Prophets** and **Heart Attack**. A forthcoming compilation album will feature a passel of the above.

New York's psychedelic revival is relatively small-scale and harmless. Self-appointed gurus the **Fuzztones** are highly theatrical, appropriating a range of '60s clichés and songs from "Pebbles" albums. The **Cheapskates** are the most fun and least pretentious of the lot. The **Vipers** take a Fleshtonal approach.

Despite recent vinyl by the **Mob, Nihilistics** and **Agnostic Front**, the city's hardcore/punk scene is on the wane. Part of the problem is a lack of ven- ►

AMERICA UNDERGROUND

R·E·V·I·E·W·S

BY JOHN [illegible]

Why Aren't These Hits?

THE CUCUMBERS (EP)—Fake Doom. This month's snappiest pop record comes from nowhere else but Hoboken, NJ. The Cucumbers' unpretentious boy/girl bop is as fresh as it is irresistible. Stripped-down Motown underpinnings get the rhythm section hopping, and Jon Fried and Deena Shoskes wrap guitars and voices lovingly around the crazy beat. No condescension. No saccharine. No nostalgia. And—significantly—no Beatles overtones. Amazing how direct and engaging a simple pop record can be. You can tap your feet, or get up and shake like mad. For those about to pop, the Cucumbers salute you. (PO Box 1698, New York, NY 10116.)

ART IN THE DARK (EP)—Somethin' Else. This quartet shares more than just a producer (Mitch Easter) and home town (Athens, GA) with R.E.M. Jangly guitars and perky but substantial pop songs make the connection uncomfortably obvious. But Art in the Dark claims its own piece of turf. Although accessible and catchy, this record is dark: Melancholy harmonies, cool keyboards and lyrics about missed or failed connections impart a lonely feel. Art in the Dark don't transcend the unavoidable comparisons, but if you give them a chance, they have a lot to offer. (PO Box 3207, New York, NY 10185.)

WEDNESDAY WEEK: Betsy's House (EP)—Warfrat. Three nonviolent femmes from Los Angeles dish out folky pop with an edge. LA suffers from no shortage of female pop acts, but Wednesday Week (presumably named after an Elvis Costello—or Undertones—song) carves its own niche. Singer/guitarist Kristi Callan's dry vocals waft just behind the beat, and she soars to high notes in the tradition of West Coast songbirds. "Teen" selfconsciousness hinders the record's impact; low-budget recording and amateurish playing add to its charm. (Box 25A39, Los Angeles, CA 90025).

URBAN GUERRILLAS: Darwin's Theory of Pelvic Revolution (LP)—Camouflage. Lightweight funky reggae-pop goes to college, and becomes disillusioned and smart-assed arrogant. The Urban Guerrillas throw occasional country or garage curves, but they don't have the bite to make you flinch or the bottom to make you dance. They do have the temerity to serve up yet another song called "Sex Beat," with the most offensive lyrics to date: "I know a girl from New Orleans/She goes down like a submarine." Too clever, with contrived ironies. (3 West 25 St., Minneapolis, MN 55404).

PINHEAD: Where Are You (EP)—B Sharp. Another ditsy dread/funk/pop band, but Pinhead's self-effacing clowning is winningly goofy. No chance of these white boys burning down the house, and they don't try to put anything over; these unlikely funkateers from Vermont let everyone in on the joke. Certainly likable, despite constant singing about not being liked. (Box 371, Jericho, VT 05465.)

Punk Plus

BUTTHOLE SURFERS (EP)—Alternative Tentacles. "I'm not fucking kidding man, it hurts," a surfing butthole wails on "Suicide," and that sums up this EP. The seven songs exorcise and inflict pain like nobody's business. Gaping sores of guitar noise and unrestrained screaming are just the beginning; there's also spurts of freestyle bashing and impossible tempo changes. Hardest of all, the band occasionally gets it all under control, just to prove the frenzy is by design. "The Shah Sleeps in Lee Harvey's Grave" leaves most thrash in the starting gate. "Something" sounds like a demented Beefheartian take of Aerosmith's "Walk This Way." And I'll accept nothing short of excellence from a song called "The Revenge of Anus Presley." The faint-hearted may not survive this, but then they probably don't deserve to. (Box 11458, San Francisco, CA 94101.)

PROLETARIAT: Soma Holiday (LP)—Non U/Radiobeat. Like fellow Beantowners Mission of Burma, the Proletariat rams blistering guitar noise through the heart of a punk attack. The Proles cut it closer to the vest than MoB, though, with more sheer speed and a militant political stance. **Soma Holiday**'s anthemic artpunk shows more of the single-minded intensity of Jimmy Carter-era political punk than the indiscriminate mania of Reaganophony. Limited and severely constricted but, like the Jam, fierce on its own terms. (Box 534, Kenmore Stn., Boston, MA 02215.)

SECRET HATE: Vegetables Dancing (EP)—New Alliance. With skewed guitar lines and cryptic lyrics, the latest offering from the Minutemen's New Alliance label sometimes sounds like wired Wire. Then, with equal persuasiveness, it stretches into reggae or Latin strides. The unifying element in this interracial band is fuck-you belligerence. I wouldn't call this political vision—neither would the band, probably—but it does focus Secret Hate's mixed-bag sound. Their excellent punk incorporates the ghetto rather than seeking an outside identity. Like most great SoCal punk records, this one suffers from production by Spot. (Box 21, San Pedro, CA 90733.)

ISM: A Diet for the Worms (LP)—S.I.N. Jism, the roaring voice of these cartoon hardcore punks, is besieged by a sea of troubles: car thieves, catmeat fast food, liberals, herpes, homosexuals and moonies. Satire was never louder, faster or more obnoxious. Churning double-speed MC5 guitar madness provides bizarre comic background for Jism's rants. The LP's best moment is the absolute devastation of the Partridge Family's "I Think I Love You"—also available on 45, with a boss picture sleeve depicting monkeys with the faces of Shirley Jones and David Cassidy going at it doggie-style. (Box 253, Oakland Gardens, NY 11364.)

DURANGO 95: Lose Control (LP)—Star. These Canadians come on like the Only Ones defrosted and heated till glowing. **Lose**

CHICAGO

Through Jerusalem." **Big Black** demands attention with a wall of noise, and posters around town large enough to be read by the legally blind.

ONO, a Residents-like performance-art/noise trio, are rarely seen onstage but much talked-about nonetheless. Yet to show their faces onstage are **Sport of Kings**, who have jumped from the Thermidor label to DB/Press. Honorable mention to producer **Iain Burgess**, a British-born knobsmith who brings out the best in whomever he records.

Bohemia culminated its first year of roadwork, giving up jobs and apartments to put 36,000 miles on their odometer. **Phil 'n' the Blanks**, resolved not to be terminally clever and cute, have revealed substance and growth potential. **Jim Skafish** released an LP on IRS, but you'd hardly know from the lack of interviews, airplay or live dates.

Chicago finally has a credible, regularly-published fanzine in *Matter*, but the city still needs a label like Twin/Tone or DB. Also, more bands have to forsake comfort and hit the road, as have Bohemia and the Effigies, to get noticed. It may finally happen in 1984. Or then again never. ■

Cary Baker is old enough to remember when Wazmo Nariz was almost popular.

CORRECTION

March's scene report on Oklahoma contained a garbled section. It should have read: "Seven-piece 'people's band' **Dominant Factor** is a classy act with soul and jazz touches. **N.O.T.A.** is the biggest local hardcore draw, having outlived most of the competetion."

NEW YORK

ues. Gildersleeves discontinued a Sunday matinee series that brought the finest US and UK punk acts to town, as well as spotlighting local big boys **Kraut** and the **Misfits**. The legendary A7 club is back in business but it's tiny and members-only now. That leaves infrequent CBGB matinees as the only real exposure for punks, local or otherwise.

Speaking of gigs, the superb Music for Dozens series at Folk City, which showcased all forms of pop in 1983, went acoustic with the new year in accordance with a new club policy. Now called Mumblin' Music for Dozens, it has featured country/rockabilly acts the **Ben Vaughn Combo** and **Last Roundup**. ■

Don Howland will give the USFL one more year.

John Koenig, Neil Spencer, Lois Manno, Rod Granger, Ed Steinberg, Marie Scuderi, John Ebersberger.

Control is romantic guitar rock at its most incendiary. Like the Only Ones, Durango 95 molds its killer folk out of punk roots, but retains the punk juice. Pumping bass and a plethora of cymbal crashes fuel the fast tempos. Dueling guitars blister their way into occasional noodling, but Greg Weir's cool vocals hold the damage to a minimum. This album is a riotous send-up designed to warm the cabin on those cold mornings in the Great White North. (148 Simcoe St. South, Oshawa, Ontario, Canada.)

CODE OF HONOR: "What Are We Gonna Do?" b/w "What Price Would You Pay?"—Subterranean. Hardcore act asks the relevant question: "Is this power only in our music or in ourselves?" Rumbling tom-tom rhythms and ringing heavy-metal guitar supply a formidable soapbox for Johnithin Christ's calls to insurrection. That the rap is dogma doesn't matter; loud rock songs, particularly speedrock, are hardly a forum for sophisticated political thought. What matters is that the push is hard and heartfelt. Code of Honor is right on target, with a compelling hardcore rush and a youthful message of rebellion. Proof these punks are literate: The drummer's name is Sal Paradise. (577 Valencia, San Francisco, CA 94110.)

BLACK MARKET BABY: Senseless Offerings (LP)—Fountain of Youth. This metallic band owes a lot to first-wave Anglo-punk. Tempos are reasonable, songs full length; lyrics yearn to change the future even as they deny its existence. And guitar riffs are bigger on weight than blitzkrieg effect. "White Boy Funeral," which cuts "White Wedding" any day, brings the band together in a powerful chant. Another promising band on the Washington, DC punk scene. (5710 Durbin Rd., Bethesda, MD 20817.)

86: "Useless" b/w "Behind My Back"—OHP. This art/punk/reggae trio breaks enough rules with enough creativity to get the most from its influences without sounding stilted. Dub bass launches Ken Schenck's industrial-noise guitar, trading skank syncopation for a solid downbeat. Mac McNeilly's drumming is all heavy-handed power thumps. Without conspicuous overdubbing, 86 gets a lot of sound and depth from its three pieces. Both songs are a little scary. (Box 30042, Knoxville, TN 37930.)

HUMAN THERAPY (EP)—Dr. Dream. Even playing jerky rhythms at blazing tempos, Human Therapy shows remarkable control. Their EP's four short songs whisper and scream with impressive dynamics. Clipped guitar and straight-ahead drums set up an orgy of jangling strings and cymbal smashes; light, jazzy interludes sound so wrong that they work. The band can build to a wild frenzy, then stop on a dime. I'm impressed. (Box 7806, La Verne, CA 91750.)

This Ain't Rock 'n' Roll

ARKANSAW MAN: "Every Job" b/w "Mark Twain"—Subterranean. Reductivist atmospherics with a heavy jazz jones may sound tricky on paper, but San Francisco's Arkansaw Man pulls it off. Foundation: a simple, steady groove built on complementary off-center bass and drums. Atmospherics: interwoven improvisations on multi-tracked guitars. Clincher: high-amateur trumpet and sax. The trio stumbles on "Every Job," which runs dogma into dogshit. On the instrumental "Mark Twain," however, bottom and high ends combine in a winning show of gentle force.

TRAGIC MULATTO: "The Suspect" b/w "No Juice"—Alternative Tentacles. Even if you didn't flip for "Brainwashed," Flipper's conceptual joke, it's hard to resist the comic paranoia of Tragic Mulatto's "The Suspect." Over heavy tom-tom rhythms and free-form trumpet, singer Skeeter Marsh pleads every known excuse for tardiness. Although the song is a joke, the music mixes mutant swing, punk and "new thing" jazz into a quirky jumble that's both hot and interesting. Jello Biafra's Alternative Tentacles label continues to release acts that cut the Dead Kennedys.

REGRESSIVE AID: Effects on Exposed People (EP)—Rhesus. A lot of angles covered here, none of them involving singing. This noisy instrumental trio mixes and matches hard percussive funk, lilting surf and King Crimsoid stridency into an unlikely but appealing package. Even at its most lyrical, Regressive Aid pushes hard, and the band shifts gears adroitly enough to avoid standard instrumental pitfalls. Side one ends like the decay of "European Son," and you know that ain't bad. (383 Lawrenceville Rd., Lawrenceville, NJ 08638.)

TANA EMMOLO-SMITH: "Prescient Dreams" b/w JOSEPH J. JACOBS: "Zanoni"—Subterranean. Two artists taking one side each make 15 minutes of creepy nightmare music. "Prescient Dreams" sets readings from the diary of Exene Cervenka's late sister Mary over ambient noise constructed of treated guitar and tape effects. It reeks slightly of necrophilia. "Zanoni, a Rosicrucian Tale" is a gothic Casio updating of a 19th century tragedy. If that's your bag...

Dance Hybrids

MODERN CLIX (EP). A less hip band might have turned this angst into a headache. Modern Clix's boiling funk, sly raps and exaggerated bitching animate songs about "society's misery" and Lower East Side despair. In spite of the weighty material, this is an uplifting record. Deep reserves of percussion humanize the drum machine, and get the jam moving with lotsa urban rhythm. The dub "Is Spock Dread," about "an enterprising young man," commits more crimes against the English language than I'm willing to countenance. But I'll dance (or just listen) to the other two cuts. (406 East 9 St., New York, NY 10009.)

DISCO RANCH (EP)—Radio Ranch. Are you ready for technotwang? Disco Ranch stakes first claim as the Devo of the prairie. With tongue firmly in cheek (I hope), these electric cowboys combine rodeo schmaltz with dance music schmaltz. The four songs on this seven-inch EP are deft and fun, if sophomoric. This hybrid won't get me dancing, but I'll listen happily. (4902 California #8, Omaha, NE 68132.)

The Cassette Set

WARD 8 (cassette). I don't lightly toss around the names of Television and the Feelies, but I hear the former's lyricism and the latter's muted tones on this impressive three-song tape. A thinking-man's guitar band, Ward 8 plays ultra-cool '80s psychedelia with no drug references, neo-'60s camp or cheapo effects. Intelligent and tasteful musicianship creates a rich, layered sound. For fans of **Another Green World**. Produced by Bongo Rob Norris. (26 Almira St., Bloomfield, NJ 07003.)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Local Heroes (cassette). Nashville, of course, has a proud musical tradition. This tape, compiled by radio station WRVU, shows the city is also home to a thriving alternative scene. Eleven bands with one song each covering a variety of styles: countrybilly (Tim Trekel and the Sluggers, Jason and the Nashville Scorchers, Delta Hurricanes), punk pop (White Animals, Practical Stylists), synth pop (Wrong Band, Factual), anglo angst (Civic Duty) and even a dose of Ocasek auteurism (Bill Lloyd). An impressive selection. (91 Rock, Box 6303, Station B, Nashville, TN 37235.) ■

hello it's me

Continued from page 6

I really wanted to dance, to disappear, to melt into a wall or laugh with someone. I saw a lady I sort of knew from a long time ago. I went up to where she was dancing and started dancing with her. We danced every song wildly. A man with her group joined us. He was a modern-looking man from Chicago. We took a break and sat down.

Debi went to get another drink and the man (whose name I can't remember) and I started talking. Soon we were being cynical together about all the people around us. A slow song came on. We were watching the couples. Jokingly I leaned over and said, "Just think, some of them will get pregnant tonight." He said, "I suppose you don't believe in marriage either."

Just then Debi grabbed us and we danced to "She Loves You" by the Beatles. Then the clock struck 12 and everyone yelled and threw things. Frank and Virginia were kissing in the center of the dance floor. Debi hugged the guy and then hugged me. I had all kinds of thoughts in my head about how the world was celebrating together and how George Orwell had written that book and how I had to work the next day and I noticed I wasn't drunk.

We danced some more and I told those guys I was dancing with that I was abandoned out there by some clods and would they give me a ride back to town. It turned out that they were going only about eight blocks from my house. When the lights in the bar came on at closing time I noticed how drunk Debi was. The guy wasn't.

It was bitter cold out. We went the wrong way on the highway and thought we were heading back to town. I insisted we were going the right way. Finally without saying a word he just turned the car around and headed toward Wausau. After a silent ride home they let me off on a corner near my house. I thanked them and walked home.

I warmed up by my stove and thought about my evening. I wondered what it would have been like if I would've stayed with June and Nick and those guys. I turned on the TV. I thought there'd be people celebrating or something. The only channel still on the air had the *700 Club*. Some born-again Christians were talking about the arms race and how the nuclear freeze movement was a group of Russian spies.

I laid there watching this stupid show and wondering if things would be different if I moved to Madison or Milwaukee and made friends with some punks or something.

Laurie Rossa
Wausau, WI

Joe Strickoff, Irwin Chusid, Jake Hunter, Toby Mamis, Bill Yaryan, Doug Moss, Mary Staples, Vin Scelsa.

reviews

PRETENDERS
Learning to Crawl
Sire

It would be difficult to fabricate a show business saga as unlikely or chaotic as the Pretenders'. Chrissie Hynde's personal journey—Ohio to London to stardom to Ray Davies—is that of an exceptionally willful woman. That she has created uniquely conceived and energetically executed rock 'n' roll while bands and lives caved in all around her proves what a self-contained pioneer she is. The pressures and weaknesses that have destroyed many "overnight sensations"—including two bandmates—have not deterred Hynde from pursuing her muse or her career.

Different forces and challenges have molded each of the three Pretenders albums. The debut was a torrent of long-gestating songs bursting with strength, joy and womanhood. **Pretenders II** was a miserable-sounding, forced follow-up infused with cynicism and frustration. **Learning to Crawl** shows the band—that is, Hynde—starting over, as the title obviously announces, from the beginning.

Two of the album's better tracks, though, were recorded in 1982: "Back on the Chain Gang" and "My City Was Gone" formed an interim single to keep the Pretenders in business while they (a) replaced half the group, and (b) took time out for their leader to have a baby. Both songs are solid efforts, gaining from Hynde's poignancy. The subsequent 45, "2000 Miles" and "Middle of the Road" (the current lineup's debut), is also included. The former is a beautiful, understated lament, the latter a quasi-autobiographical rocker ("I'm not the kind I used to be/I've got a kid I'm 33") with a harmonica break as unexpected as it is exciting.

That leaves six new numbers. As always, the best employ the neat trick of setting Hynde's vocals at emotional odds with the music. "Time the Avenger" is the obvious standout: The band throbs loudly to a solid beat, while Hynde sings like she's lounging in a hot tub. "Watching the Clothes" inanely uses laundromat instructions for lyrics, but also shifts key back and forth, raising it from dumb idea to intriguing oddity.

The mock-country "Thumbelina" doesn't convince. The doo-woppy "Thin Line Between Love and Hate," **Learning to Crawl**'s sole non-original (by the Persuasions, not the Kinks!), proves only that Hynde is becoming increasingly versatile. "I Hurt You" has a lumbering tempo and no discernible melody. Even when the songs don't work, though, Hynde's presence is commanding and aurally pleasurable. She's a voice that demands to be heard.

Martin Chambers, the other original Pretender, has largely abandoned his inventive drumming to concentrate on a foursquare rock beat. That eliminates one of the band's prior attributes, putting the focus even more completely on Hynde's shoulders. Newcomers Robbie McIntosh (guitar) and Malcolm Foster (bass) are adequate; the late James Honeyman Scott's eloquent riffs are sorely missed. All in all, **Learning to Crawl** is 100 percent Hynde. And it's fine.

—Ira Robbins

NINA HAGEN
Fearless
Columbia

Hi, and welcome to ringside. Round two of Nina Hagen vs. Columbia Records is about to get underway, but for those of you who tuned in late here's a brief recap.

Round one was all Hagen. Her aptly titled US debut LP, **Nunsexmonkrock**, was a triumph of thrillingly anti-commercial music that had the corporate superstructure on the ropes. She sang, dribbled, moaned, drooled, muttered hippie-oid incantations, spewed incomprehensible inanities and laughed at her own jokes in at least three languages while her band pounded out an eclectic mix of reggae, opera, Chinese folk music, schlock rock, free-form '70s avant-art noise and anything else that happened to wander through their apparently deteriorating collective cortex. So bad it was almost good (with emphasis on "almost"), it was obvious that the likelihood of airplay, save on the most daring college radio stations, was nil. There's always a handful of weirdos out there ready to rally around anything under the banner of hipness, so cult status wasn't entirely out of the question. The sales figures told a sad tale, however, and for a while it seemed it was Hagen over Columbia by a TKO in the first.

But wait! Coming into Columbia's corner is producer Giorgio Moroder and his entourage. This match isn't over yet. There's the bell . . . Moroder jumps in with his patented funka-psycho-disco-delic production shield in place. "New York" starts out sounding like another of Hagen's babytalking rants, but soon she's popping her consonants like a Marcus Miller bass line and the track closes with her chanting the names of N.Y.C. dance clubs. Moroder smiles, but Hagen bounces back with "My Sensation" and "Flying Saucers." The former is a sexy (or what passes for sexy in Hagenland) piece of nonsense done up in Hagen's Grace Jones-meets-Alicia Bridges voice; the latter has old-fashioned new age clichés looking forlorn and threadbare in their tattered paisley outfits.

Moroder retaliates with a tight, funky arrangement on "I Love Paul" but Hagen spoils his fun by chanting "hare krishna" for several choruses. She scores again on "The Change" by chirping stuff like "There is no death" and "We are all one person," etc.

By the time "Silent Love" starts side two *Moroder's on the run.* Here Hagen's '60s girl-group affectations meet Chinese opera melodies at the Vatican for a long string of lyrical juxtapositions unanchored by anything resembling a rational process. Now Moroder calls in outside help as Hagen covers a rappish tune called "What It Is." She uses "far out" and "groovy" too many times but the track works, i.e. sounds like everything else on the radio these days. Ditto "TV Snooze," another New Muzak track aimed at the heart of the dance clubs; with its beat box, hot bass line and compressed drums it might even be a "hit."

Hagen takes revenge on "Springtime in Paris" by reading a menu entirely *en francais* but Moroder has the last laugh. On the final track he pulls out all the street funk clichés at his command: beat box, scratch effects that ping-pong from speaker to speaker, it's all there. Hagen does her best to subvert his aims but it's another case of New Muzak *über alles.* And there's the bell!

I'd call round two a draw. Moroder has tamed some of Hagen's more eccentric excesses, but she still rambles through 18 octaves at will, and she'll babble and chatter out her screwball visions no matter who's twiddling the knobs. What makes Hagen Hagen is her unlistenability. Why sign someone whose main appeal is her love for otherworldly vocal obstreperousness and try to cram her into the straitjacket of commercial acceptability? Hagen'll never be a superstar no matter how much they gild the lily, so why don't they let her alone to make her own unique hippie dippy mini-epics? One Duran Duran is more than enough; a Nina Hagen, even if you don't like her or never listen to her, is few and far between.

—j. poet

PSYCHIC TV
Dreams Less Sweet
(UK) Some Bizzare

If the members of Psychic TV were employed in a Madison Avenue advertising firm, they would probably package toilet paper in a fake book jacket, or rat poison in a perfume vial. The mixed signals given off by this fascinating, quixotic quintet so completely mask their intent that the only way to handle **Dreams Less Sweet**, their second album, is to lie back and enjoy the

Greg Shaw, Paul Grant, Suzy Shaw, Vivian Stanshall, Roger Ruskin Spear, Nik Cohn, Audrey Strahl, Micki Dage

sounds. The complexity and discontinuity of imagery and techniques require a studiousness far greater than anything descended from "awopbopaloobop" deserves. In short, the critic had no idea what the record was about.

Not that I ever understood Throbbing Gristle, the defunct (?) organization that gave birth to Psychic TV, either. That band's contrasting noise and delicate, melodic pop was clearly a presage of Psychic TV's hyperintellectual obfuscation. Who else would proudly note on an inner sleeve that "no microphones at all were used in the recording of this LP"? Or thank, evidently seriously, the Rev. Jim Jones and Krafft-Ebbing? These folks may act weird on purpose, but pretense will get you only so far, and they crossed that lines ages ago.

Psychic TV's first album, **Force the Hand of Chance**, introduced the group's quasi-religious beliefs and hybrid electric/ethnic-acoustic instrumentation. **Dreams Less Sweet** softpedals the mystical side and its accompanying folderol (although the inner sleeve lists three different addresses for various inquiries) in favor of strange musicmaking. With guitar, bass and drums supplemented by Tibetan singing bell, attack dog, choir, orchestra, Tibetan thigh bones, telephones, vibes, an Uzi machine gun and church organ, Psychic TV serves up a wild assortment of noises nice and nasty, soothing and searing. Some tracks are songlike; others are fragmentary slices of effects. Two non-originals indicate the group's eclectic thinking: One is by Tudor composer Thomas Tallis, the other by Charles Manson.

This is soundtrack music for which no film could fit. Although not exactly enjoyable, there is something magnificent about **Dreams Less Sweet**. You may not know what hit you when it's over, but you'll know you've been hit.

—Ira Robbins

BLUE ZOO
2 x 2
RCA

It's never a very good sign when a band's hair stylist gets equal billing with the "guest musicians," as is the case on Blue Zoo's debut album. No cause for Alarm, though: **2 x 2** stands on its own merits, quite apart from the plumage of its British creators.

On first hearing, Blue Zoo seems like a secular U2—that is, they're concerned less with moral faltering than girlfriend troubles. Singer Andy O. lets fly with cries of Bonoesque anguish. Guitarist Tim Parry plays to the void, scratching out clean, chattering neo-funk lines. Drummer Michael Ansells sounds like he's banging on muffled garbage cans (a U2 hallmark).

There are some good-to-great songs here, particularly "Cry Boy Cry," whose chorus beats Kajagoogoo's "Too Shy" hands down. Blue Zoo is especially ingenious with backup vocals, whether speeding them up on "Cry Boy Cry" or massing them on "I'm Your Man."

One small bicker, though. With no lead instruments, melody takes a back seat to the interlocking components of Blue Zoo's small-ensemble sound. When the band neglects to vary arrangements or tempos sufficiently, the tracks tend to sound rather samey.

But one doesn't want to complain too loudly about commercial pop as bracing as "Cry Boy Cry" or "(I Just Can't) Forgive and Forget." Blue Zoo can also veer toward the experimental without sounding insufferably precocious, as on the psycho mantra "Open Up" and Velvet Underground moodscape "Something Familiar." And when they prove they can take you to the brink of tears with "Love Moves in Strange Ways," an early-Bowie-style tone poem, you can only hope Blue Zoo survives the perilous currents of British musical trends to make more records as good as this one. —Parke Puterbaugh

D.O.A.
Bloodied but Unbowed
CD Presents!

I didn't think they made punk records like this anymore, and for the most part, they don't. **Bloodied but Unbowed** (subtitled **The Damage to Date: 1978-83**) is a 19-song document of five years in the life of Vancouver's D.O.A., compiled from singles, EPs and two out-of-print albums. (Unfortunately, the spirited liner notes provide little factual information, and no recording dates.) The band stands revealed as one of the most coherent and exciting in the history of North American punk (new wave era).

Musically, the half decade covered here began with punk's idealistic pessimism and ran through to the insular militance of (non-thrash) hardcore. D.O.A. has undergone numerous personnel changes—singer/songwriter/guitarist Joey Shithead (Keighley) is the only remaining original member—but the band has maintained its aggressive worldview, along with uncompromising levels of volume and violence. D.O.A. knows who the enemy is, and offers active resistance.

Anyone familiar with the group knows it can make noise. **Bloodied but Unbowed** shows Shithead is also an exceptional songwriter. There isn't one merely functional tune on the record. Like Black Flag and the Ramones, D.O.A. considers itself a black-sheep offspring of rock tradition: Those screaming guitar lines are *riffs*, the vocal howlings are *songs*.

"New Age" (not the Velvet Underground song) kicks off the LP with a fat Clash guitar riff and a cynical view of the new world. "Rich Bitch" (not the Stooges song) is cock-rock with a social consciousness. "Fuck You" (not the John Denver song) is gonzoid heavy metal with anthemic intensity. "I Don't Give a Shit" is a humorous look at slobdom on the Vancouver dole. "Whatcha Gonna Do?" is punky reggae. All make **Bloodied but Unbowed** testimony to the power as well as diversity possible in orthodox punk rock. (1230 Grant Ave., Suite 531, San Francisco, CA 94133.) —John Leland

BILLY IDOL
Rebel Yell
Chrysalis

Critical listening is self-defeating when dealing with a macho jerkoff like Billy Idol. Sure, Generation X had its moments, but that youthful fury now looks like the crocodile tears of a big baby who was angry 'cause his slice of the pie was so small. "Dancing with Myself" is pretty neat if you can ignore Idol's pouting video narcissism replete with gratuitous sex and violence. And after a year I still can't tell you what "White Wedding" is about—maybe nothing.

I have the same problem with **Rebel Yell**: Every time I think I hear something tasty I give a closer listen to find I was imagining things. It's

Continued on page 55

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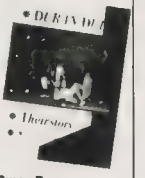

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hit & run

By Jon Young

DAVE BALL/In Strict Tempo
(UK Some Bizzare)

Without Soft Cell partner Marc Almond supplying sleaze, keyboard player Ball is a cold-hearted bore. **In Strict Tempo**'s drab mood pieces strain for wry wit to leaven the pretentiousness, with little success. It's just a jumble of undeveloped ideas. Psychic TV's Genesis P. Orridge warbles on two.

COCTEAU TWINS/Head Over Heels
(UK 4AD)

Played straight, **Head Over Heels**, with Elizabeth Frazer's prettily apathetic vocals, would be a memorable excursion into the dark side of folk-rock. But there's more: The Twins drench themselves in echo, rendering the LP more bizarre than brooding. It's as if Phil Spector at his most deranged had produced Sandy Denny. Intriguing.

CRISTINA/Sleep It Off
(Mercury)

Cristina's second album covers an arresting variety of styles, from tart funk to smart punk, all honed to razor sharpness by producer Don Was. Make no mistake, though: She's the star here. However limited a singer, Cristina spits out tunes like "The Lie of Love" and "Don't Mutilate My Mink" with convincingly angry defiance. Lou Reed hasn't acted this ornery in ages.

MITCHELL FROOM/The Key of Cool
(Slash)

Froom casts a powerful spell on these synth-dominated tracks, most from the film *Café Flesh*. The futuristic beatnik jive, dreamy sci-fi atmospherics and other exotica should all induce pleasurable chills in those who like their art giddy and surreal.

THEE MIDNIGHTERS/Best of
(Zyanya)

Latino Angelinos Thee Midnighters flourished in the mid- to late-'60s and deserved better than one minor hit ("Land of a Thousand Dances"). They performed everything from smoochy ballads to soul rave-ups with an honest zest that's naive by today's high-tech standards. This is the kind of record that starts a party.

MUSICAL YOUTH/Different Style!
(MCA)

Musical Youth's difference is their easygoing confidence. Second time around, the kids are even looser than before, mixing carbonated reggae with enough pop sweetness to charm anyone frightened by the heavyweights. Dig "Sixteen"'s echoes of '50s vocal groups, or the hypnotic "Mash It the Youth Man, Mash It."

PERFECT ZEBRAS/Zebra
(UK Focus)

The Zebras mosey languidly from gray funk ("Wah-Ho Bangoola") to watery synth-pop ("Fascination") to cool jazz raps ("Weekend") without stepping on any toes. Droll, harmless and mildly pleasing, like a glass of warm milk. Barry Andrews produces.

PETER & THE TEST TUBE BABIES/The Mating Sounds of South American Frogs
(UK Trapper)

A curious hybrid. This quartet excels at vola-

CRISTINA

tile, white-hot guitar, such as U2 puts to impressive use. On the other hand, their lyrics offer some of the crudest accounts of sex and drunkenness to come along since the grossout early days of punk. It's hard to appreciate striking melodies when the singer's bragging about barfing. Ugly.

RE-FLEX/The Politics of Dancing
(Capitol)

These inoffensively perky synth boys generate enough noises to keep you awake, at times resembling a sped-up Gary Numan. Just don't ask what it's about. It's about nothing, despite the title track's protest to the contrary.

THE SECLUSIONS/Isolation for Creation
(Fuz)

On paper, promising: Musicians include Busta Jones, Jay Dee Daugherty, Joey Ramone, Jimmy Destri and Holly Vincent. Songs include the Yardbirds' "Shapes of Things" and the Blues Magoos' "We Ain't Got Nothin' Yet." However, singer Randy Dash is a poor student of Jim Morrison/Iggy who can't even handle Iron Butterfly's "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida." The playing falls flat too. Bummer. (1007 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10021.)

SIOUXSIE & THE BANSHEES/Nocturne
(UK Polydor)

Beware a band that makes superb use of the studio and then releases a live set stamped "NO OVERDUBS." Integrity aside, this two-LP set reveals Sioux as more a presence than a singer. While the band zips along with cool efficiency, she wanders on and off key. Sometimes it's scary, sometimes just painful. Far better is the **Once Upon a Time** singles collection, an intentionally hair-raising experience.

SLICKEE BOYS/Cybernetic Dreams of pi
(Twin/Tone)

For brawny, good-humored power pop, Washington, DC's Slickee Boys are hard to beat. Highlights: "When I Go to the Beach," a jolly surf parody; "Pushin' My Luck," featuring robust vocal harmonies to rouse the dead; and a breezy version of Status Quo's "Pictures of Matchstick Men." If the glibness seems a tad superficial, save **Cybernetic Dreams** for when you've got the blues.

UTOPIA/Oblivion
(Passport)

Another reminder of past glories from Todd Rundgren and friends; ingeniously layered production partially compensates for creative fatigue. Once upon a time, Todd's approach was the smart alternative to Hall & Oates' crasser soul. Now, the latter are positively eloquent in comparison to his baroque self-indulgence.

VAN HALEN/1984
(Warner Bros.)

What makes Van Halen the best bad boys around? Believe it or don't, a real light touch—there hasn't been a primal belch this refined since early Zeppelin. ("Jump" is a lesson in avoiding synth clichés.) David Lee Roth makes a perfect clown and nobody can top Eddie Van Bertinelli for megaheavy axework ("House of Pain"). No kiddin', bud.

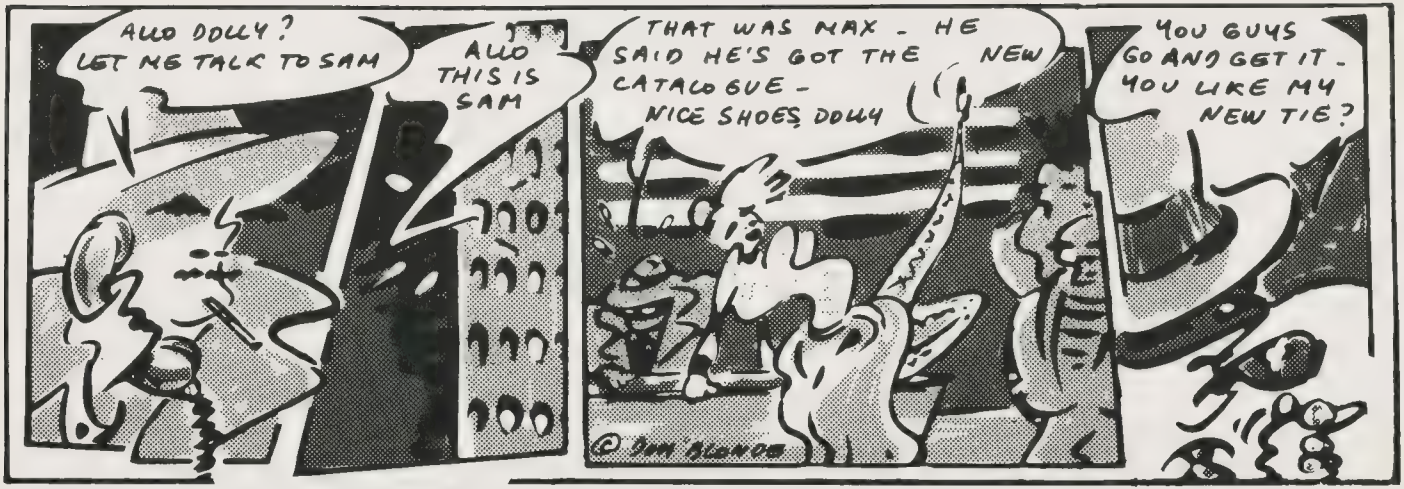
WANG CHUNG/Points on the Curve
(Geffen)

The former Huang Chung aims directly at the hip middle of the road their second time around. The band combines the Police's precise execution with a pretty good Bowie impression by leader Jack Hues. Although **Points** is more palatable than ABC's preening, it pales next to the Chungs' debut, where they struggled to forge a distinctive style.

Bits and Pieces

The **Moonlighters**' "Rush Hour" (UK Demon), tepid bar-band rock produced by Nick Lowe; **Visage**'s "Fade to Grey—The Singles Collection" (Polydor), shallow glamor; "Track Record" (A&M), a **Joan Armatrading** compilation with two new cuts; "The **Everly Brothers** Reunion Concert" (Passport), a respectable if subdued return; "Rhino Teen Magazine, Vols. 1 and 2" (Rhino), swell bubblegum hits by the **Ohio Express, Sweet, Syndicate of Sound**, etc.; "Word Soun' 'Ave Power" (Heartbeat), seven dub poets, including **Mutabaruka**; "You're a Hook—The 15 Year Anniversary of Dial-A-Poem (1968-1983)" (Giorno Poetry Systems, 222 Bowery, NYC 10012), including **Laurie Anderson, Patti Smith** and **Frank Zappa**. ■

Kathy Miller, Greg Reibman, Frank Horowitz, Mark Fleischmann, Chalkie Davies, Jed Hauck, Dave Ginsburg,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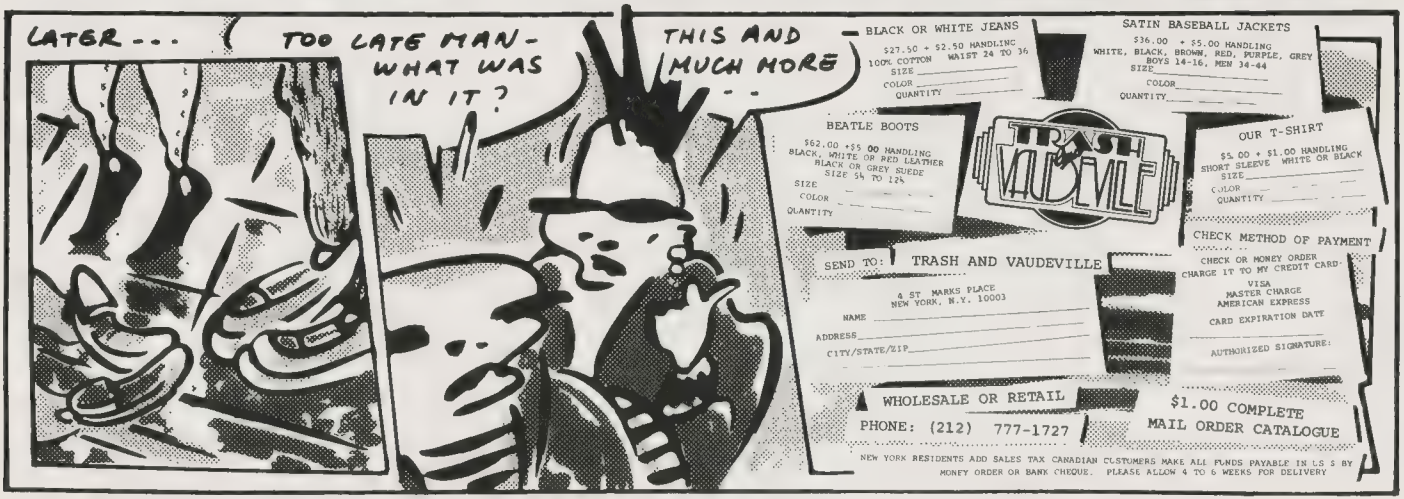
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ULTRAVOX
Monument: The Soundtrack
(UK) Chrysalis

Okay, maybe this *is* from a video concert, but **Monument: The Soundtrack** is still a pompous title, and symptomatic of where Ultravox has been going wrong lately. Fortunately, that's the only sign of disease on this nice little EP.

The record proves a couple of things. Ultravox has pretty well mined out its particular vein of electropop but puts on a terrific show. The concept band is now a performance band, and maybe that's not so bad.

The self-produced **Monument** is less technically acute than George Martin's stylish, sterile **Quartet**, but more sympathetic. "Vienna" is the best track here, and the best song, but even the **Quartet** material shows signs of life. Let's hope Ultravox's production and performance acumen shows up the next time the band hits the studio.

—Steven Grant

JOHNNY THUNDERS
Diary of a Lover
PVC

The so-called "elegantly wasted" persona pioneered by Keith Richards may lack redeeming social value, but there's no question of its enduring popularity: Former NY Doll, former Heartbreaker Johnny Thunders's every recorded move is an homage to the coolest Stone.

There's a distinct downside in taking this raunchy, disheveled approach to the limit, as **Diary of a Lover** amply demonstrates. Whether doodling on guitar (Booker T.'s "Green Onions") or slurring a self-serving acoustic ballad (the title track), Thunders's intense sloppiness leaves him (and the listener) trapped in an unsatisfying dead-end. A rough and ready discourse on street life like "In Cold Blood" can't avoid being boring, however authentic—it's been done so many times before, and with more fire. (Five of these six tracks come from the French **In Cold Blood** LP produced by Stones vet Jimmy Miller—a perfect marriage.)

By definition, a diary should remain private. That goes double for this one.

—Jon Young

PHIL JUDD
The Swinger
MCA

New Zealand's Phil Judd has already taken the initial steps toward becoming a bona fide cult figure. As the creative force behind the original Split Enz and more recently the Swingers, he fashioned a small yet distinctive body of work that stripped down the conventions of art-rock and left just the weird parts. What might this inspired wacko accomplish, given the chance?

Alas, his six-song solo debut is a disappointment. Although Judd finally has the opportunity to stretch, **The Swinger** suggests he's been afflicted by a loss of nerve. (Not to mention producer Al Kooper—ugh—on four cuts.) "Dream 'n' Away" and "Dictionary of Love," among others, are tame novelties highlighted by cutesy vocals and singsong melodies. Before, he would have been dangerous as well as cuddly.

Diverting though it is, **The Swinger** indicates that Judd may be following in the path of Brian Wilson and Syd Barrett—geniuses who retreated to the role of harmless eccentric. Here's hoping he can be his old odd self again next time.

—Jon Young

THE DICKIES
Stukas Over Disneyland
PVC

If the Ramones ever had a West Coast counterpart, it's the Dickies. A few years back these hyperactive Californians released two wonderful albums of no-frills cartoon rock 'n' roll. They might have anticipated the rise of hardcore by playing even faster than their eastern bruddahs.

After an extended absence marked by the death of keyboardist Chuck Wagon, the Dickies have returned with a dandy eight-song EP. Half of **Stukas Over Disneyland** dates from 1980. Highlight of the old stuff: "She's a Hunchback," featuring Leonard Phillips's typically cheerful babbling. A well-meaning version of Led Zeppelin's "Communication Breakdown" unfortunately lacks the absurdity of their reading of "Nights in White Satin" (from **Dawn of the Dickies**) and, anyway, you can't top the Zeps at their best.

The 1983 tracks are a shade less manic (and better recorded), but display the same zing and good humor as before. "Pretty Please Me" and "Wagon Train" are splendid joke anthems, with surprisingly strong melodies buried under that invigorating noise. The title cut could thaw out Uncle Walt, if only to seek retribution.

So welcome back, Dickies. Hey, ho, let's go!

—Jon Young

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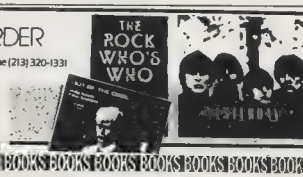

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mainly fluff and it'd be easy to dismiss with a shrug except for Idol's histrionic pseudo-frenzied delivery and Steve Stevens' crunchy heavy metal pop guitar licks. On the title track and "(Do Not) Stand in the Shadows" Stevens' guitar sounds like it could move heaven and earth given half the chance. His burning Bernard Albrecht-influenced drone solo on "Eyes Without a Face" is one of the album's high points.

But ultimately Idol hogs so much of the spotlight that even Stevens' mad riffing hasn't got a chance. I know it's unfair to burden Billy's vapid imagination with the memory of one of rock's great sleazebags, but I hear echos of Jim Morrison in Idol's voice and I keep expecting some grand poetic conceit, something weighty, something clever at least. Unfortunately every time Idol lets out one of his chilling growls he sounds like he's barking up the wrong tree. All that passion is directed at himself.

Idol's got the vocal licks and the technique to make great pop music, but **Rebel Yell**, like its predecessor, sinks under its creator's pretensions, another semi-serviceable piece of disposable commercial product. There's a joke going around that asks why dogs lick their own genitals. The answer: Because they can. If Billy Idol could, he would. —j. snob

THE GO-BETWEENS
Before Hollywood
(UK) Rough Trade

Like a new acquaintance whom you find intriguing but distant, **Before Hollywood** comes to you on its own terms. You circle around it, not knowing quite what to make of it; then one day you realize you've come to know it intimately, as if it's been with you all along—"a ghost of something old," as the Go-Betweens sing on "Dusty in Here," a plangent ballad for piano and guitar.

A certain strain of rock is not dependent on volume yet is no less viscerally arousing than the loudest band you can name. The Go-Betweens join a proud honor roll: the third Velvet Underground album, Love's **Forever Changes**, early Modern Lovers, Television, Human Switchboard. Like Lou Reed's **Coney Island Baby**, to which it bears more than passing resemblance, **Before Hollywood** cuts through to the passionate soul of rock with tough songwriting, engaging words, a broad viewpoint and no fear of risk-taking.

There is no technical virtuosity here. The Go-Betweens plumb expressive depths by aligning rock basics with a literary disposition. Guitar playing is uncluttered by effects or solos; melodic bass lines are free of dischotèque clichés. Lindy Morrison plays a modest trap kit with becoming understatement. (Shades of the VU's Mo Tucker!)

Part of the band's charm comes from a sense of effortlessness. "As Long as That," with its sultry vocal and lightning organ flashes, rolls off the record. The title track's cramped sense of dislocation resolves into the paradisical promise of the chorus. "Ask" features a Tom Verlaine-like vocal, "Cattle and Cane" a childhood-recollected narrative.

For those who have been overindulging in the empty calories of trendier music, **Before Hollywood** might come as a revelation. It's music from the head and heart—not the fat gut.

—Parke Puterbaugh

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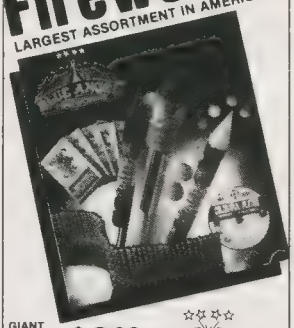

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Soft Boys — Invisible Hits (UK latest!) . . . 8.45
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Squeeze — Singles comp / East Side Story / Sweets Argybargy-each LP . . . 8.45
Stingrays — Thoughts (New UK psychpunk) . . . 7.75
Stranglers — Midnight Summer Dream ('12" 45) . . . 4.98
Stray Cats — Shaped disc (UK superb! Sexy/ Beat) . . . 4.98
TV Personalities — They Could've Been (UK-great!) . . . 7.98
Talking Heads — Speaking in Tongues (pic disc-Ger) . . . 19.98
Three O Clock — (-) French 3 cuts extra? . . . 7.45
Thunders, James — Hurt Me/Hr only-acoustic LP . . . 7.98
Time West — Hollywood Hooligans (Fr import only LP great!) 5.98
UZ — New Year 12 (Jap diff mixes & live B sides) . . . 8.98
V Effect — Stop Those Songs (Rough Trade UK) . . . 4.45
Vibrators, The — Shakers — Cats (Fr-EP-new pcs) . . . 4.45
Virginie, Toin — Days On/Postcard (UK 12") Only . . . 2.95
Violent Femmes — (-) Great new US Psych-UK import) . . . 6.45
Waves — Shock Horror (legendary ex-Sofi Boys) . . . 6.50

Overseas Pressings—'60s Pleasers

21 Hitz Wonder — Vol 2 (UK Poets Mighty Avengers, Birds etc) . . . 7.50
Acid Dreams — Great 60s psych comp rare) . . . 15.95
Action — Ultimate Action (UK 60s Exclt) . . . 9.98
Animals — (-) (re of 1st UK LP) . . . 6.98
Animals — Anthology (2 LPs — 64- 66 great) . . . 10.98
Bacon Fat — I (Lyne-exact re) . . . 9.45
Baburbo — (-) Re of UK prog hard LP . . . 8.95
Bailey, Philip — Harley Davidson (Sexy Fr pic & music) . . . 7.98
Beatles — Sgt Peppers (pic disc-Holland) . . . 7.98
Bennett, J — Rock Revival (Fr-rel Sofi You (UK 64-68)) 7.98
Bennett, Buster — 12 OBs (Lyne-Ger -re) . . . 8.45
Bowie/ David James — (UK) 10" mini-LP early cuts) . . . 9.45
Bragues — Mercy (Germ-early-g-rage) . . . 9.50
Carinova — Live (2 LP pic. French only) . . . 10.98
Charlatans — Autumn/ Demos (65 prev unrel great) . . . 9.50
Chilcken Shack — Imperial Years (Best-rare-Fr-live) / 'n 'n Roll
Chuc Watch Band — Let's Talk About Girls (Fra) . . . 7.45
Continental Lashes Back — Europe 60s psychpunk bands & scenesters (giant a musts) . . . 7.98
Count 5 — Dynamite Incidents (live-prev unrel.) . . . 9.50
Creation — How Does It Feel (re w/ insert) . . . 8.98
Creation — Rest of (Exact re of German DP) . . . 9.98
Creation — We Are Pantermen (Exact re of German DP) 9.98
Creation / Mark Four — Eva-some (rff tracks) . . . 7.98
Deca Dragon — Vol 1, 2, 3 (60s UK bands-rare) 8.50 ea
Doors — Alive She Cried (Fr dirt/ package live) . . . 7.98
Dylan — Historical Archives Vol 1, 2 (Ruby-rare tracks) . . . 7.98
Endless Journey — Vol 1 (US 60s psych) / Vol 2 . . . 8.98 ea
Vol 3 (just out!) . . . 8.98
Equals — Greatest Hits (highly recommended UK band!) . . . 7.98
Fantastic Deejays — Fright Fire (re of US punk band) Eva . . . 7.98
Fleetwood Mac — Practice Sessions (Eva-prev unrel.) . . . 7.75
Flames Gravelles — Slow Death Love (prev unrel.) . . . 7.98
Flamin Groovies — Supersnazz (exact re) Special only . . . 6.98
Flat Earth Society — Exact re of legend US psych . . . 8.50
Florida Pearl — Pre local 60s punk comp . . . 7.98
Fourmost — 1st & Fourmost (exclt UK 60s) . . . 7.98
Franklin Explosions, Aliso — Bluez Climax (re) . . . 8.50
Fuller Bobby Four — Bobby Fuller (unrel & bsds) . . . 12.50
Fuller, B. 4 — Fought (Eva-great package) . . . 7.75
Hollies, Rarely — Population 2 (ex-Blue Cheer-hard rock) . . . 9.95
Ireland — Vapeur Mauve - Eva . . . 7.98
Honeycombs — (-) (exact re-German) . . . 7.98
John's Children — Revised Version" EP-4 prev unrel) 7.98
Jupiter, Janis — Live LP (prev unrel) . . . 7.98
Journey to Tyme — US 60s comp . . . 19.98
Kenny & Kasuals — Things Gettin Better (Eva-rare) . . . 7.98
Key Large — Mona Varma/ Introduced 60s blues . . . 8.45
Kinks — Konkroversy/ Kinks/ Face to Face (UK re) . . . 6.98 ea
Kinks — Kwach (Jap only-prev unrel 67-69 cuts) . . . 11.95
Kinks — More on the Lap (64-67 rare unrel material) . . . 11.50
Left Banke — & Suddenly (rff mixes etc -UK) . . . 8.50
Let s All Make Love in London — Rare prev unrel Seonics Pink Floyd, Art . . . 9.98
Liker — $100 Fine (exclt US psych-exact re) Only . . . 6.98
Liverpool '63 - 65 — UK 60s sampler-rare tracks) . . . 6.98
Martin Georgie — Off the Beatle Track (UK-rff) . . . 7.98
McGuire, Barry — Eve of Destruction (exact re) . . . 7.98
Mersey Beat — UK 2 LPs gatefold great compsit) . . . 11.98
Mindbender — Vol 1-8 (Rare US psych punk) . . . 8.50 ea
Music Machine — Talk Talk (UK re) Only . . . 6.98
Oliver Hall — Re of ultra rare 7/ 2 label (LP) . . . 8.98
Outsiders — Sad Loved Girl (Pretty Things-a must!) . . . 7.98
Pavlen's Dog — Pampered Mi / Sound of Bell (re) . . . 7.95 ea
Perfumed Garden — Vol 1 (2 60s UK psych comp) . . . 8.98 ea
Peste & Translation — Tell Us About (German package) . . . 8.45
Pretty Things — 67/71 (UK-the singles) . . . 7.98
Q 65 — Greatest Hits/Revelation . . . Only 5.55 ea
Rattles — Liverpool Beat (2 Great German Beat bd -re) . . . 9.45
Remakes/Live (Eva-prev unrel) . . . 7.98
Rejects & Raiders — Rarities (Lska Long Hair & rare cuts-2 LPs) . . . 14.98
Richard, Cliff & Shadows — All My Love (UK) Only . . . 6.95
Shangri Las — Leader of Pack (Ger re) / 65 . . . 8.50 each
Small Faces — Rare Mods Rock/ Im Mermaid Each . . . 8.45
Small Faces — The Singles LP (65-67 cuts-Jap) . . . 9.98
Small Faces — Ogdens 's Nut (exact re-circular jacket) . . . 8.98
Son of Gutbucket Tribe — 60s psych-comp . . . 11.00
Savory & Char — Plus Bettes Chansons (Fr only embossed cover-best) . . . 7.98
Seonds, Ian — UK, 81-84 cuts/ Charity Rods) . . . 7.98
Standells — Dirty Water - Eva . . . 7.98
Tages — 1964/68 (2 LPs Swedish superb 60s rock . . . 11.95
Top Topham — Ascension Heights (All Vernon prod -60s blues-re) . . . 8.50
Truggs — Live at Whisky (UK-rare) . . . 14.98
Ugly Things — Vol 1 & 2 (Rare comp) . . . 9.98 ea
Warbeats — Red Sea (exact re w/ gatefold) . . . 14.95
Who — Rarities Vol 1 2 (Rare cuts prev non-LP) . . . 7.98 ea
Yardbirds — Live (Rare early-only-7 & previous-live) 0.98
Yardbirds — 5 Live (live at Marquee-Charity re) . . . 7.98
Yardbirds — Second Helping (Rare single tracks) . . . 8.50
Zappa/Mothers — Abs. Frnds/ Rubeo & Jigs/ Lumpy Gravy (Jap-re) . . . 14.98
Zappa/Mothers — Freak Out (2 LPs gatefold Jap exact re) . . . 25.00

More Overseas 45s NB new PS unless otherwise stated

1000 Mexicans — Art of Love (Wham UK -new psych) . . . 3.00
Abba — 77-82 (27 45s & 1 pic disc- box set) . . . 75.00
AC/DC — Guns for Hire (shaped pic disc) . . . 5.75
Agnetha — Can't Shake It (Fr only PS) . . . 4.98
Bananman — Crusher EP (with make the Cramps blush) . . . 3.98
Barracudas — Laughing At You (Fr) . . . 3.00
Beth, Kate — Hell Breaks Pak (2 cuts sung in French) . . . 8.98
Cannibals — Paralytic Confusion (Great UK psych) . . . 3.00
Carnadas, Las — Blanche & Noir EP (Beatheart punk) . . . 3.50
Castells — Write the Book (UK DH jacket) . . . 2.99
Castells — Write the Book (French) . . . 2.99
Divine — Shoot Your Shoot (Fr only) . . . 2.99
Doctors & Medics — Hands Are Here (UK psych punk) . . . 2.98
Equals — 5 cuts EP & great PS (Eddie Grant-UK) . . . 3.00
Eurythmics — Love Is Stranger (UK pic disc) . . . 4.45
Heroes — Tie Around Your Neck (Rath & Lunn) . . . 3.00
Jackson & McCartney — Girl Is Mine (Fr) . . . 2.98
Jackson, Michael — Happy (French) . . . 2.98
Jackson III — Smack My Bitch Beat It /Billie Jean . . . 2.98 ea
Joel, Billy — Sagaon (Dutch) . . . 2.98
Lad Zeppelin — Hey Hey What Can I Do (new-LP Jap) . . . 3.98
Lad Banks — Live EP (Fr) . . . 2.95
Madness — Sun & Rain (7 " pic disc) . . . 2.50
Madness, M — Chantie (Fr great PS) . . . 3.98
Page Boys — Hey Hey Baby Susan (60s pop type) . . . 3.00
Pamberly Three — My Baby Does (UK Soft Boys[11]) . . . 3.00
Lena Spiders — Double single set (Aussie-great psych!) . . . 5.95
Rice — Desolation Angel (Fr only-new unrel.) . . . 7.98
Rudy, Jerry — Jailhouse Rock (Fr only) . . . 3.50
Prisoners — Tomorrow (non-LP)/ Hurricane (UK) . . . 3.00
Prisoners — Hurricane (Fr) . . . 3.00
Razzy Bleu — A Tribute/ Avalon (Fr . . . 2.99
Rivers — Memories/ Dancing (Fr only) . . . 2.98
TV Personalities — Sense of / Parades (UK) . . . 2.45
Shakers — Cats (Fr-EP-new pcs) . . . 4.45
Stones — Norway promo only Rec & pic interview & musics 50
Stranglers — European Female (Fr) . . . 2.99
Thunders — Hurt Me (Fr only) . . . 3.00
Tyler, Bonnie — Total Eclipse (Fr) . . . 3.99
UZ — Two Hearts / Total Eclipse (Jap & PS) . . . 3.98
Warsaw — Ideal Beginning EP (prev unrel & 4 bsds cover) . . . 7.98
Who — Ready Steady EP (exact re-great pic!) . . . 3.45

New & Recent US 45s NB PS unless indicated

7 Seconds — Skins Brains & Guts EP (hard hardcore) . . . 2.00
6G Allin — Drunk, Fight & F*ck EP (latest wild hardcore) . . . 2.00
Angst — Exclts — Lynxdat / Rampage (wild L. Wray styled rockabilly) . . . 2.00
Angst & Ramones — Nice pop-girl lead . . . 2.25
Arkansas Mess — Every Job (twisted beat hypnotic stuff) . . . 2.00
Beasty Boys — Polly Wog EP (beast/ hardcore-setup B) . . . 2.50
Black Flag — Nervous Breakdown/ Six Pack-SCS[7] . . . 2.00 each
Black Flag — TV Party/ I've Got to Run/ My Rules/ Unicorn . . . 3.00 each
Black Flag — Louie Louie (with PS) . . . 2.00
CH3 — It Take My Chance . . . 2.00
Pennsylvania — Don't Bother Run (NY exclt pop rock) . . . 2.00
Cents — Live 83 (latest) . . . 2.00
Cents — Date With / Open Your Mind (wild) . . . 2.00 each
Dead Kennedys — Holiday / Bleed / Halloween / Too Drunk / Nazi Punk (& anti band!) . . . 2.00 each
D.O.A. — Right to be Wild / F** k U (hardcore) . . . 2.50
Exhibitics — Down & Out (Jazz & straight forward MY) . . . 2.00
Fear — "sic" Xmas / Beep Xmas - . . . 1.75
Flipper — Sex Bomb (unique-a must) . . . 2.00
Forgotten Rebels — Tall Me (punchy punk-Canada) . . . 2.25
Hysterics — Live EP (60s classic revisited – a must) . . . 7.00

Jets — Paper Girl (UK mid 60s type) . . . 2.00
Hoboroys — Cinderella (Sonics revived) great . . . 2.00
Leather Nun — Pimemover (hardcore psych) . . . 2.00
Lovley Trains — Going Down (great psych) . . . 2.50
Leopard Society — Screaming (Cramps sound) . . . 2.00
Lumpen Prole — Wasn t Home (NY new psych J. D type) 2.00
Minimen — Time Tunnel . . . 2.00
Minutemen — Paranoid Time SST . . . 2.00
Moodoom — Thermodore EP . . . 3.00
Moose & Traps — Hot Rod Lane (exclt comeback) . . . 2.00
Morning Noise — N J psych hardcore . . . 2.00
Nails — 88 Lines About 44 Women (sexiest psych song . . . 2.00
Nuthouse — Called to Serve (Japanese fav-exclt EP) . . . 2.00
Piers — Shorebreak (EP) great surf instr . . . 2.00
Plasmas — Circus (exclt Minneapolis rock) . . . 2.00
Plus 9 — 9 5 Years / Heart of My Time (New!) . . . 2.00
Replacements — I m In Trouble . . . 2.00
RW Dockers — Falling (Soft Boys type) . . . 2.25
Savage Republic — Ghost Dance (NY Noir fi. w jacket & insert) . . . 2.00
Shetland Fish — Love America (hardcore) . . . 2.00
Skeletal — Rhythm Gort (EP-prod by Cramps) . . . 2.00
Stoned Beats — Chocolate People (punk) . . . 2.00
Space Negroes — We Wish You a Lousy Xmas (Punk EP) . . . 2.00
Spooks — 1980 EP (red vinyl -a classic) . . . 2.50
Suburbs — WHo (Lyndwood) great mod/ sound . . . 2.00
TSOL — Weathered Statues EP . . . 2.00
Tragic Models — No Juice (great avant garde punk) . . . 2.00
Toads — Re / Beach / Youth (great 60s inspired pop) . . . 2.00 ea
Tripod Jimmie — Spike the Dike (great avant garde punk) . . . 2.00
Verge — EP a poster (Buzzcocks type NY) . . . 2.00
White Lines — Every Night Not Every Lover's Game . . . 2.00
Yard Trannes — Some People (Tucson best new psych) . . . 2.00
Ugly Things — No 2-zine, music Machine interview & more . . . 2

Books & Magazines

80th Floor — zine new and old psych scene & fleon disc Plastic and Fuzzones Vypers . . . 2.00
Aquarius Records — Vol 1 Top of the 60s (LSD bands & pix) 9.95
J D / Mew Order — 140 pages of vital inf nks & pix UK . . . 8.98
Lady Killers — Benatar K Bush, Girlschool, etc UK color mags . . . 2.00
Living Eye — No 3-gets group 60s & psychpunk scene No 4-rockabilly special & psychpunk . . . 2.00 ea
Ugly Things — No 2-zine, music Machine interview & more . . . 2

LP Pressings—60s & Psychedelia

Aswells — Annette s Sacrapbook (21 prizewest mks.) . . . 4.50
Aswells — Beach Party (4 Music Beach Party re) . . . 6.45 ea
Ant Trip Ceremony — Exact re of 60s psych LP . . . 9.95
Back from Grave — 17 wild '60s US punk rel 2) . . . 8.98
Beau Brummels — Original (rre of 1st LP) . . . 6.45
Beaulders — Vol 2 4 5, 6, 7 8 (psych-punk) . . . Each 5.75
Bee Tees — Greatest Hits (Rhino Reds) . . . 6.50
Beckley, Tim — Best (Ex-Sopwith Camel of 6 LPs) . . . 6.50
Challengers — Best of (Great surf) . . . 6.45
Charaine Watchband — Best (some prev unrel) . . . 6.45
Chasin Fear — Exact re of 60s punk comp) . . . 7.98
Electric Sugar Cube — Vol 2 (rare UK mod/ psych) . . . 7.50
Flashback — Vol 1 2 (Tex 60s punk comp) . . . Each 8.50
Fuller, Bobby — Greatest Hits (Rhino 6 book) . . . 6.45
Garage Master for Psych Heads — cassette V A '60s . . . 5.98
Guns — Vol 1 & 2 (60s girls group comp) . . . 7.45
Glimpses — Vol 1 2 (Rare UK psych) . . . 9.98
Goodman Dickie — Greatest Hits (Rhino 56-83 cuts) . . . 6.45
Haunted — Vol 1 2 (prev unrel Canadian band) . . . Each 6.45
High in the Sky — Vol 1 2 (Rare UK psych) . . . Each 9.45
Hipsville 28 BC — US 60s punk bands compilation . . . 9.50
History of Fo & Eddie & Turtles — 3 LPs book) . . . 16.45
History of H W Underground — Vol 1 (wild 60s punk) . . . 4.98 ea
History of Surf Music — Vol 1 2 3 (Rhino) . . . Each 6.45
History of Vaudeville — Psych Era (Seeds of Times etc & picture book-groups) . . . 8.50
Instrumental Madness — (Great stuff-fid quantity) . . . 7.98
Jan & Dean — 1 Summer Night Live (2 LPs) . . . 11.45
Jagas — Fabulous Hits (Rhino 6 cassette-punk) . . . 7.98 ea
Kingsmen — Yayo/ 1/4 to 3/ House Part . . . 8.98 ea
Kinky Music — 60s cuts by L Page & R Davies etc . . . 6.50
Lamps — 60 (Rhino) - Formerly Rare . . . 6.45
Lennon — Life with Lions (rare original LP fid stock) . . . 35.00
Lincoln St Exit — Prev unrel EP (7" EP-psych hard) . . . 3.50
Midwest to the West — Cuts from 60s comp . . . 6.50
Monkees — Silhouette Pcds pic disc prev unrel . . . 8.50
Monkees — Monkeeshines (prev unrel) . . . 8.50
Monkees — Monkey Flips Vol 1 (prev unrelissue) . . . 8.50
Mazz — Hit Parade (Great rare all 3 LPs) . . . Each 6.45
Nuggets — Original Elektra cassette-same as 2 LPs . . . 8.98
Off the Wall — Vol 2 More great 60s punkers . . . 9.95
Open Up Your Head — 60s psych punk comp . . . 9.50
P B Oreo & Weapons — (exact repro US 60s punk . . . 5.75
Pebbles Vol 11 & 12 — More 60s psych-punk . . . Each 6.45
Plastic Dna Band — Psychic Pop (Ex LPS17/ re/calendar $35)
Psychedelic Unknowns — Vol 5 (Rare 60s cuts) . . . 8.95
Psychedelic Unknowns — Vol 4 (20 cuts) . . . 8.98
Pyramids — Penetrated (re-great 60s surf) . . . 9.98
Rasputin & the Weeks — re of 60s punk cult LP) . . . 7.98
Sir Douglas Quintet — 1&1&1'4 (Only pressing) . . . 7.95
Spun Up Two Heads — Rare 60s punk comp . . . 9.50
Sonics — Here Are (wild punk-exact re) . . . 6.98
Sonics — Fire & ice/ Ding N W punch (wideset) Ea LP
Spector, Phil — Wonderful World of (Ex-LP/ 5 cuts) . . . 6.98
Standells — Best of (Some prev unrel) . . . 6.45
Surf Beat — Trashmen Jan & Dean etc Canada) . . . 8.50
Thirteenth Floor Elevators — Live (Ex-LP/ 5 cuts) . . . 9.98
Turtles — It Ain t Me Babe (re) / You Baby (re.) . . . 5.50 ea
Turtles — Wooden Head (Rhino) . . . 6.45
Ugly Things — Vol 1 2 (Rare UK psych) . . . Each 9.98
What A Way to Die — Kool 60s punk compil . . . 9.50
The Wig — Live at Jade (Texas 60s cult) . . . 7.45
Zakary Thaks — Harry Bolan (Texas punk) . . . 7.98
Zakary Thak — Texas Band (rare 60s singles) . . . 5.75

New & Recent US LPs

2D/2D — Sex Trap (Remix etc -Enigma Rcds) . . . 5.98
Agent Orange — Bloodstains/ Summer (12" EP-great!) . . . 4.45
Agent Orange — Living in Darkness (original!) . . . 6.50
Agent Orange — When You Least Expect It (latest) . . . 4.45
Amis, Danny — Whoopash (Hollywood lead guitar great) . . . 4.75
Avengers — (-) Second West Coast Trash . . . 6.95
Baby Buddha — Music For Teen Sex (techno rock) . . . 4.95
Bad Brains — Rock for Light (prod by R Ocasek) . . . 5.75
Barracudas — Drop Out with (diff from UK) . . . 6.50
Beach Blvd — (Sempletones Crowd R L Rick-Cale) . . . 5.98
Birthday Party — Prayers on Fire (New Aussie psych) . . . 6.50
Black Flag — Wasted . . . 5.50
Black Flag — Jealous Again (mini LP) . . . 4.45
Black Flag — Jealous Again . . . 6.50
Bellamy Cassandra — Once a comp on SST . . . 6.50
Bone of Lies — Cryptic Memo (Chicago Bonemen type) . . . 3.98
Bonemen — Bonemen Bonemen Bonemen Jam! . . . 3.98
CH3 — After the Lights / Fear of Love (latest LP) . . . 5.95
CH3 — Manzanar (12" EP-exclt punk) . . . 4.45
Carleton, D. — In with Outakes (ex Choir/ Circus, etc Outakes cassette) . . . 6.50
Chesterfield Kings — Here Are (1st LP-wild psych) . . . 6.49
Chrome — Box (4 LPs box & book) . . . 29.00
Circle Jerks — Golden Shower (latest) . . . 6.50
Code of Honor — Hardcore & psych touch . . . 6.50
Cramps — Smell of Female (live at Pipp Lounge!) . . . 5.25
Crowd — World Apart (beach rock -exclt) . . . 4.75

D.I.(-) Great West Coast psych hardcore . . . 6.50
DOA — Bloodied but Unbowed (78 83 rare sides) . . . 8.75
BOA — War on 45 (more LP-latest) . . . 6.50
Dead Boys — Night of Living Dead Boys (Bomp) . . . 5.98
Dead Kennedys — Bleed for Me 12 . . . 3.75
Dead Kennedys — In God We Trust . . . 4.98
Dead Kennedys — Plastic Surgery Disasters . . . 6.50
Dicks — Kill From the Heart (Texas finest punk band) . . . 6.75
Dickies — Shrunk Over Stonehenged (latest) . . . 5.75
Dill Cangress — (-) (Ex-Flesh Eaters) . . . 3.98
Dream Syndicate — (-) New LP (SE 96 list) . . . 6.50
Dream Syndicate — Sunz Thing (12 EP) . . . 4.98
Driving Bo by — Rockabilly Psychobilly (new psych new-LP 6.50
Dwags — 12" EP-new and fab!!! . . . 4.50
Eastern Front — Vol 2 3 (new US bands comp) . . . ea 6.50
Effigies — Fire in Da Graveyard (West Coast hardcore-12 " 4.75
Elvis — 30 TV (theme etc 12 ") . . . 3.25
Embarrassment — Death Travels West (psych punk) . . . 4.98
Englishe Ait Rock Ensemble — (Ex-Residents/ Fowley) . . . 5.98
Fastbix — Schneidt (screaming electronic) . . . 5.98
Fartz — World of Hate (hard core) . . . 4.75
Flaming Hamsters — Exact re of Bands (New Death live) . . . 6.45
Flashbeaters — Hard Road to Follow (latest LP) . . . 6.45
Flipper — Generic (the one & only -hardcore) . . . 6.50
Fools, Face — Public Safety (great mod/ power pop!) . . . 9.75
45 Grave — Phantoms (maze EP-psych punk) . . . 4.75
45 Grave — Party Time (new 12 " EP) ($4 98 list) . . . 3.95
45 Grave — Partytime (new LP $8 98 list) . . . 6.50
Forgotten Rebels — Ain t Hollywood (Canadian Ramones) . . . 6.98
Freeze — Land of Lost (exclt punk) . . . 5.95
G.B.H — City Baby Attacked by Rats . . . 5.95
Gerbil Hat — (-) Intense psych W Coast) . . . 5.45
Green on Red — The LP (latest $6 98 list) . . . 5.45
Green on Red — Gas Food Lodging (LP $8 98 list) . . . 6.98
Haskar De — Metal Circus (SST hard core) . . . 4.45
Insect Surfers — Sonar Salan (new surf) . . . 5.45
Jason & Nightcrawlers — Revenge (great r baby) . . . 5.45
Jesi, Billy — Cold Spring Harbor (exact re) . . . 5.95
Joyner, Bruce — Way Down (ex Unknowns) . . . 5.45
Killer Pimps — Bikini Wax (new grand new and spicy) . . . 6.50
Krayolas — Kalacas Nuclear (Texas 60s folk punk type . . . 5.95
Let Them Eat Jellybeans — 17 cut rockcore comp . . . 6.50
Level & Rockets — Louisiana Hayride . . . 5.45
Lost — The Fall of Rome (SST) . . . 4.75
Long Ryders — 10-5-60 (mini LP-Byrds styled) . . . 4.75
Los Angeloes — Rhino comp -Phogz Brat etc) . . . 6.45
Locust, Tex — Life Beats Death (Texas punk genius) . . . 5.98
Lyres — Burned Alive (great 60s garage type) . . . 5.45
MDC — Millions of Dead Cops (hardcore) . . . 4.45
Meat Puppets — (-) (Ex-Golden Palomino) . . . 5.45
Metal Massacre — Vol 2, 3 4 (US metal V A) . . . 6.98 ea
Microsuzz — Smash / Mortal (exclt 'iggy type) . . . 4.98 ea
Minor Threat — Out of Step (hardcore) . . . 4.45
Minutemen — What Makes a Man / Punch Line . . . 6.50 ea
Minutemen — Buzz or Howl (legend West coast-12 ") . . . 4.45
Modern Lovers — Live (Ex-Talking Heads) . . . 5.45
Morells — Shake & Push (fun 50s sound) . . . 6.50
Negativehead — Instant / No Other / Points . . . 6.45 ea
Net Six Band — Rock Around the Clock (2 LPs) . . . 11.45
Numbers — 64/67 (Tx -band- Beatles / Beach Boys type) . . . 5.45
One Hundred Flowers — Great West Coast new psych . . . 6.50
Pariah — Vocal (Ex-Dead Kennedys) . . . 5.45
Phones — Changing Minds (mid west psych hard rocks) . . . 6.50
Pistons — Right 581 (straight forward rock) . . . 5.45
Pranqsuits — Hello (Ex-Residents) . . . 5.98
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CAPTAIN SENSIBLE
The Power of Love
(UK) A&M

Pretty silly. This eccentric British pop 'n' roll stands or falls on its blend of charm and euphonious sounds. What little redeeming social value the lyrics may have intended is undermined by almost willfull vagueness or obliqueness. **The Power of Love** is an acquired taste of questionable worth.

Having gotten that off my chest, I can now add that I've acquired that taste. On his first solo venture, **Women and Captains First**, Sensible messed around in such unlikely areas as Rodgers and Hammerstein ("Happy Talk") and rap-funk ("Wot"). He's narrowed his stylistic focus on this second outing mainly to somewhat modernized '60s Britpop leavened at points by a mellower version of "Wot"'s sleek, if tongue-in-cheek, funk. The music is still intoxicating and insidiously addictive.

The lightweight **Power of Love** is less incisive—even in a humorous sense—than Sensible's solo debut. What could be less relevant than *two* songs about the difficulties and delights of royalty in the modern world? "Glad It's All Over" endeavors to make an anti-nuclear war statement (I think), and there's other social commentary interspersed, but this is no message album. The non-original title track is one of three love songs (!)—pure corn, but swell coming from this unexpected source.

Two numbers, both written by Sensible with ex-Soft Boy Robyn Hitchcock, posit a difference between loopiness and lunacy, drugged or otherwise. But there's no reason to take everything so seriously either. That's not such an off-the-wall antidote to these unfunny times, is it?

—Jim Green

The History of Latino Rock
Zyanya

Los Angelinos
Zyanya

Rock 'n' roll is commonly (and rightly) remembered as a musical breakthrough that formed a cultural bond between black and white Americans—black and white rock 'n' rollers, anyhow. But what about Hispanics, after blacks the next largest racial group in the US? Haven't they ever been affected by the big beat?

Si hombre, as two compilation albums on Zyanya (a subsidiary of Rhino Records) prove. **The History of Latino Rock** and **Los Angelinos** show the depth of Spanish-American involvement with rock: The records concentrate almost entirely just on artists to come out of the Los Angeles area.

Ritchie Valens (Valenzuela) is a founding father of Hispanic rock 'n' roll, and his fiery "La Bamba" appropriately leads off **The History of Latino Rock**. But "La Bamba" is the only Spanish-language song among the album's 16 tracks. "Donna," the other half of of Valens's two-sided hit, also included, owes less to *el barrio* than Tin Pan Alley.

So it goes with the rest of the **History** (subtitled **Vol. 1—1956-1965, the Eastside Sound**): Racial identity stops with the names and faces. Maybe this generation of Latinos was more eager to assimilate than proclaim themselves separate but equal. In any case, here's Chan Romero with a rousing version of his own "Hippy Hippy Shake"; noisy ravers "Farmer John" by the Premiers and "I Want to Do the Jerk" by Ronnie & the Pomona Casuals; and "Land of a Thousand Dances" by Cannibal and the Headhunters. Surprised? "Cannibal" was Frankie Garcia.

Here too is lounge schlock from the Romancers and Thee Midnighters, and slow, soupy numbers from the likes of Li'l Julian Herrera and Rene and Ray. The latter, almost self-parodistic genre has been lovingly mocked by the Mothers of Invention, whose Frank Zappa heard this stuff when it was new. **The History of Latino Rock** isn't all exciting, and very little of it sounds Latino, but it is a fascinating sociological document.

Los Angelinos stays in East LA but time-travels into the present to showcase nine contemporary Chicano (in whole or part) groups. Liner notes to the contrary, the music owes little to Spanish culture. You'll go for a side and a half before hearing a non-foursquare rhythm; a bilingual lyric sheet is a nice touch, but only three out of 12 songs are sung in Spanish.

What you do get is sterling pop-punk from the Plugz, and generic punk with heavy messages from the Brat. Both bands (and others, like Odd Squad) are of mixed racial composition, which might explain the choice of style. On the other hand, all-Hispanic Thee Royal Gents play note-perfect Philly soul; perhaps it's the slick stuff that impresses LA's Latin community.

Not surprisingly, the most charming music on **Los Angelinos** rejects *Yanqui* pop conventions entirely: Los Perros' traditional "Corrido to End Barrio Warfare" is a stirring plea, while Califas' "La Música" puts idealistic sentiment to a cute arrangement.

Nobody here can approach Carlos Santana for formal innovation. As a variegated sampler, though, **Los Angelinos** covers some ground and proves all people are united by their differences.

—Scott Isler

SEX GANG CHILDREN
Beasts
(UK) Illuminated

What passes for innovation these days. Sex Gang Children recycles a couple of late-'70s formulas (angular rhythmic crunch, tribal primitivism), paints them black (*de rigueur* in current ghoul-school circles), and becomes a respectable cult band.

This collection of UK singles touches a lot of familiar bases. The thudding bottom sounds like Bauhaus; chaotic vocals recall the amateur experimentation of Slits/Raincoats-type post-punk. Over it all, Sex Gang Children hangs a humorless cloud of doom-and-gloom gothic cliché.

Funny thing is, I like Sex Gang Children. Behind the obvious references and derivations, behind the curtain of voodoo Catholicism, lies a spirit of creative anarchy. Sex Gang Children embraces the fashionable ethos that not only can anyone be a musician, anyone can be an *artist*. The band ventures forth beyond its technical limitations, scrambling some of the "givens" of rock music. The freedom is often as not misapplied, but its very presence is exhilarating.

Beasts' title cut kicks into a lyrical 9/8 passage that sounds perfectly natural until you try tapping your foot to it. "Cannibal Queen"'s multi-tracked vocals fight each other for dominance until they resolve in the couplet, "Nail your wrists to the wall/This is the Catholic party ball." On the negative side, the tuneless "Times of Our Lives" runs flat irony ("These are the times of our lives/We're having fun") into the mire of stock despair.

Sex Gang Children is a talented lot that could use a fresher perspective. For **Beasts**' obnoxiousness they deserve a sound spanking. But I have to approve of the band's misbehavior.

—John Leland

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THE FALL
Perverted by Language
(UK) Rough Trade

The juggernaut continues. Whether or not anyone's listening, Mark E. Smith, Manchester's answer to Allen Ginsberg, leads yet another Fall through yet another set of non-songs for the post-industrial wasteland. There's much to be said for naked passion and poetry in disc form, but I wonder if even Smith can remember any of his compositions after recording them.

The Fall's extensive catalogue includes some fascinating work: the double-drummer Icelandia of **Hex Enduction Hour**; the mesmerizing intensity of the live **A Part of America Therein, 1981**; the startling normality of the **Slates** mini-LP. Still, each album starts from scratch, achieving whatever level of organization the group as then constituted can handle.

Perverted by Language is well-recorded if stylistically unambitious. It sticks close to the bare-bones, anti-virtuoso playing typical of most Fall repertoire. The six-person band, including some returning alumni and Smith's American wife (guitar, lead vocals on one number), alternates between crushing stridency and delicate awkwardness. Smith's lyrics, as ever, are pointed and uncompromising, addressing subjects presumably of interest. One needs a very fine tuning device to hit Smith's wavelength; otherwise, the ranting amid the cacophony is just more static.

Perverted by Language is no digression from the Fall canon. Fans—and an interesting and devoted lot they are—will groove on the power and forthrightness of "Garden," the awesome nine-minute live "Tempo House," and the almost comical insistence of "Smile." The rest of the world will hear unmelodious scrapings and a fierce but largely incomprehensible shout. Unlike many contemporary groups, you can always count on the Fall to satisfy expectations.

(Trivia: The album's cover painting is by one-time *Trouser Press* intern Claus Castenskiold. Way to go!) —Ira Robbins

REAL KIDS
Hit You Hard
(French) New Rose

The Beatles are spirit, the Stones flesh, and never the twain shall meet. Right? Wrong. Any John Felice fan can tell you his Real Kids combine the best of both worlds. **Hit You Hard** occupies the zone where "Day Tripper" and "Wild Horses" overlap—where beauty and noise reach an uneasy, spellbinding truce.

"She," the opening track, sets the tempo by pitting Felice's husky, almost breathless vocals against a cascade of pastel electric guitars. On this and subsequent tracks ("Now You Know," "Right When It's Right") Felice sounds like he'd rip the songs apart if he sang any louder. No Dwight Twilley sugary sentiment for this boy! Not surprisingly, on the two occasions Felice succumbs to his influences, he mimics Mick Jagger: Jimmy Reed's "Take It Slow" apes the early Stones at their bluesiest; "She's a Mess" recaptures the nervous tension of Jagger trying to imitate a country singer.

The big question is: Why are this Boston band's records released only in France? They ought to be heard by all their fellow Americans who appreciate true-blue rock 'n' roll. Bring the boys home now! —Jon Young

B O O K S

Hardcore California
(Peter Belsito and Bob Davis, eds.; Last Gasp, Berkeley, CA)

The title is something of a misnomer. This book is not restricted to hardcore, except inasmuch as its authors conceive of hardcore as an uncompromising aesthetic philosophy.

Hardcore California (subtitled *A History of Punk and New Wave*) is an extensive and hip account of alternative music in Los Angeles and San Francisco from 1977 to the present. Its foot-square pages are chock-full of black-and-white photos of virtually every significant band to come out of the area in that time, with sketchy explanatory prose stuffed in between.

Perhaps the book's strength is that it spares us any tired sociological explanations for the phenomenon of punk rock. The authors are content to document the period and let the faces speak for themselves: Darby Crash menacing an audience shortly before his suicide; Jello Biafra carried, mike in hand, by a tide of surging punks. These and other photos capture the insanity and anarchic excitement of an era of musical revolution.

The Los Angeles section, penned by Craig Lee and a 16-year-old named Shreader, is merely a running narrative of dates and names that doesn't shine any light on its exponents. Conversely, Peter Belsito's San Francisco chapter is an enlightening look at the punks and fans that made the scene jump. Belsito scratches beneath the surface with a host of interviews and song lyrics.

Hardcore California is a visually arresting

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John Guarnieri, Seymour Stein, Shirley Chapman, Danny Heaps, Bill Asp, Twin/Tone, Dan Burgoise, Walt O Brien,

document that more than survives its hit-and-miss prose. The one annoying feature is the full-sized ad-like reproductions of 19 albums covers as the book's only color. Did I mention uncompromising aesthetic philosophy above?

—John Leland

Yardbirds

(John Platt, Chris Dreja & Jim McCarty; Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., London)

The Yardbirds' fascination is that of promise unfulfilled. In a six-year career they released just one studio album in England, and by the time **Yardbirds** came out, crucial bassist/arranger Paul Samwell-Smith had quit. The legendary Jeff Beck/Jimmy Page line-up gigged little and recorded less. After Beck left, they fell into producer Mickie Most's clutches and cut scarcely a worthwhile track.

John Platt, editor of '60s fanzine *Comstock Lode*, has teamed with guitarist Chris Dreja and drummer Jim McCarty, the Yardbirds' surviving ever-presents, to produce an affectionate yet detached account of the group's career. The photos, many from the two musicians' collections, are terrific, and this is one rock book with a decent index. The music fails to come alive, but enthusiasts will savor the background to each recording. (Who plays what on "Happenings Ten Years Time Ago" remains hazy.)

Giorgio Gomelsky, the Yardbirds' first manager (dropped by the Stones), had some brainstorms—like booking them into Sun Studios with Sam Phillips for "The Train Kept A-Rollin'"—but left the band in financial chaos. Descriptions of the early package tours are fun. A wide-eyed Dreja was in the wings when Kink Mick Avory felled Dave Davies with a cymbal: "I was going to quit the music business, but within a month they were all back together, playing again."

Yardbirds also revises the history books. "We were all very straight and never took any dope at all," McCarty said in 1977, "until we finally succumbed, wore a kaftan and beads and got high in a hotel room!" Here, "I was turning on all the time. . . Keith [Relf] was a real problem. . . he'd accept anything from anybody." A photo of the last line-up bears out the latter version.

Of course it wasn't just luck that Led Zeppelin and the Jeff Beck Group with Rod Stewart cashed in where the Yardbirds had pioneered. The rhythm section was erratic, and Relf's singing, though often effective, lacked authority. But you won't find that kind of analysis here: Ben Richardson's *Trouser Press* monograph remains the best musical account.

Neither Keith Relf's solo singles nor the Relf-McCarty duo, Together, are mentioned. Perhaps understandably, Dreja and McCarty's post-Yardbirds activities are not lingered over. (The latter once wrote *Melody Maker* complaining that his band Shoot, which wasn't exactly setting the world alight, couldn't get on TV.) McCarty is now on the London circuit with the Ruthless Blues Band; Dreja is a commercial photographer.

There has never been a truly satisfying Yardbirds compilation LP, but at least now there's a good book.

—Harry George

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green circles

By Jim Green

THE SMITHS: "Hand in Glove" b/w "Handsome Devil"—(UK) Rough Trade; "This Charming Man" (London and Manchester mixes) b/w "Accept Yourself" & "Wonderful Woman"—(UK) Rough Trade

Yes, friends, after all these years good ol' Rough Trade is making a commercial push. Beneficiaries are the Smiths, a Mancunian foursome who play not the electro-funk suggested by assorted mixes of "This Charming Man," but rather what might be termed "power pop" were the music not so raw nor the lyrics so artsy.

The pivotal line of "Hand in Glove" is "The sun shines out of our behinds." That, plus a picture sleeve of a male derriere, is a heck of a way to lead off a debut 45. Further, *Sounds* and the British daily *The Sun* decided that "Handsome Devil" is about molesting young boys—a claim not borne out by lines like "let me put my hand on your mammary gland." Both sides, though, are punchy numbers of great promise. "This Charming Man" realizes that promise in somewhat calmer fashion. As before, the guitar has a glassy jangle, bass is driving and agile when it counts, and drums supply just the right amount of rhythmic fillip. Monochromatic crooning is more of an acquired taste, but the melody (particularly in the bridge) is addictive. I now find it necessary to play the record at least a couple of times a day.

Choose your version: The "Manchester mix" of "This Charming Man" is also available on 7-inch. The "London mix" adds echo to the guitar for a unique effect, but lightens the beat. Francois Kervorkian's New York mix—a separate 12-inch, vocal backed with instrumental—clarifies the vocal and emphasizes percussion, but extends and dissects the song dub-style to no great advantage. Neither of the two 12-inch B-sides can hold a candle to the 7-inch flip of "Jeane," in which the Smiths get tender but not gloppy.

DEBBIE HARRY: "Rush Rush"—Chrysalis

Harry's voice and lyrics plug into Giorgio Moroder's predominantly electronic dance track—well-produced but nothing special in the tune department. Harry doesn't seem very involved, which probably says less about her than the basic superficiality of this record: "Rush Rush" is, after all, just a slice of soundtrack music from the remake of *Scarface*. The best bits are her nonsense syllables at the chorus. (B-side's a dub version.)

STYLE COUNCIL: "A Solid Bond in Your Heart" b/w "It Just Came to Pieces in My Hands" & "A Solid Bond in Your Heart (Instrumental)"—(UK) Polydor

Paul Weller keeps on keepin' on, churning out earnest, listenable and unremarkable blue-eyed soul. This single is more upbeat than the last, but still snoresville. The Style Council might've started out taking chances, but it's about time Weller went out on another limb; he's getting formulaic. The instrumental version underlines how faceless the tune is. The low-key, acoustic "Pieces in My Hands" is evidently another musing on the pitfalls of stardom: "I thought I was king of this whole crappy jungle/I should've been put behind bars." Make mine a lager.

SLEEPING LIONS: "The Sound of My Heart (Baroque Remix)" b/w "Heart Dance" (extended)—(UK) CBS

Here's just the sort of tune Weller wishes he could come up with, and from an unlikely source. The Lions have a stupid name, went through an embarrassing public image search (worst of it: nobody cared), and put out a couple of competent but trite singles. Now this, which is girl/post-Motown/dance-club deluxe, hardly original but real catchy. Dunno what the 7-inch sounds like—maybe less is more—but I do enjoy this 12-inch version. The lengthy dub on the back is overdoing it, though.

BILLY BRAGG: Life's a Riot with Spy vs. Spy—(UK) Utility/Go!

"I'm not looking for a new England/I'm just looking for a new girl," sings Cockney-accented boy with electric guitar and no other instruments. Bragg's self-described "seven track album" (length: about 12:00) suggests a young Paul Weller minus the punky Whoisms and fiery rhetoric, but with a dash of Costelloesque wordplay ("The Milkman of Human Kindness"). Bragg wants to tell us he's streetwise but vulnerable, honest enough to admit he's not always honest; he lacks the substance to pull it off without seeming a little too coy. Contender or appealing *poseur*? The evidence is intriguing but inconclusive.

THE GO-BETWEENS: "Man o' Sand to Girl o' Sea" b/w "This Girl, Black Girl"—(UK) Rough Trade

Aussiephiles are used to far more "commercial" fare than the Go-Betweens' spare, slightly ragged guitar/bass/drums instrumentation and emotionally raw lyrics. Lately, the band has been playing some fetching melodies; I even hear a resemblance to America's own Translator on this single (post-**Before Hollywood**). An energetic lope adds zip to a simple but haunting tune, while the love lyrics center on the stilted title phrase. It makes sense (sort of) on its own terms. The flip is a pleasant flower-power throwback. A quartet to watch.

FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD: "Relax"—Island

A pair of Anglopoofters, or at least they're promoted as such; the video for "Relax" portrays the lighter side of sexual deviation. The record is pretty harmless, unless you want to make something of the words, "Relax, don't do it, when you want to come/suck to it." Producer Trevor Horn probably deserves credit for the sound: Foreigner making a dance-club record as a semi-goof. (Well, it does have pompous choral flourishes.) Quacking synth and strong vocals make "Relax" insidiously entertaining if not timeless. (Dub on the back.)

THE ESCAPE: "Amsterdam" b/w "Girl in the Phone Box"—(UK) Mercury

Are the Associates defunct? Their better half, Alan Rankine, has at least temporarily thrown in with this lot. The catchy "Amsterdam" could've been lifted straight out of the Associates songbook, though Rankine didn't write it. (He does co-produce as well as perform). It's not as pretentious as 99 percent of **Sulk**, but the singer is almost as theatrical as Rankine's ex-partner, Billy MacKenzie, and has an even homelier voice. The flip is one of those fragmented slices of life; of passing interest only.

VIOLENT FEMMES: "Ugly" b/w "Gimme the Car"—(UK) Rough Trade

A neat group with limitations and potential. Can you imagine the Velvet Underground as a bunch of high-school kids? "Ugly" is a bouncy put-down; "Gimme the Car" goes from a plea for Dad's keys to a fervid exposition of the backseat delights to a gloomy existential complaint (!). Contents: brittle guitar, super bass, a pseudo-sitar break, avid drumming. Cool but forgettable.

Short 'n' Sweet

Those who like Echo, Modern English and the Furs should check out Scottish trio **Zerra I**'s "The Banner of Love" b/w "Cry" (UK Second Vision). Good stuff.

The Questions purvey exceptionally lithe but sinewy white funk-soul; the singer is a bit smoother and less derivative than Martin Fry but with a thinner voice than, say, Boy George. "Tear Soup" b/w "The Vital Spark" (UK Respond) are well turned-out; too bad the material's so slight.

Is that *the* **Andy Scott** who's put out "Kruggerands" (UK Statik)? The one who used to be in the Sweet? Methinks the guitar on this otherwise synth-dominated dance track is a tell-tale sign. But it's a disappointment. Both it and the flipside, "Face," are just flat-out dull.

I'd never have expected this from JA toastmaster **Dillinger**, but "Tribal War" (UK 10) almost buries him with female vocals and synthesizers. The result could be almost anybody but does sound mighty good—a reggae record with pop sense and well-sculpted sonic dynamics.

Cabaret Voltaire, whatever it is they do, usually produce music of frightening power and intensity. Not so with with two versions of "Yashar" (Of Factory New York), both remixed by New York console king John Robie. The track is basically flaky dance music with a faint Middle-Eastern scent.

Birthday Party's "Mutiny" EP (UK Mute) marks a label change and a concentration on idiosyncratic ballads, with vocals mostly out front. It's not nearly so compelling (or rocking) as the preceding "Bad Seed" EP, and "Mutiny in Heaven" goes too far with the gratuitous degradation, but "Say a Spell" does project striking visions.

Speaking of excess, the **Thompson Twins** beat all comers by putting two ridiculously distended versions of the same song on a 12-inch: the 10-minute "Hold Me Now" (UK Arista) is retitled "Let Loving Start" for another nine on the flip. It's not a big dance number, either, more a quiet late-nightish affair. All the repetition can't make it memorable. Feh.

From an unexpected quarter comes "Clean Heart" (UK Stiff), a five-song EP by the **Inspirational Choir of the Pentecostal First Born Church of the Living God** (yes!). Unassumingly solid backing by the likes of saxophonist Gary Barnacle and bassist James Eller makes these mostly original gospel numbers sound like a breath of fresh air.

Tina Turner turns in a solid but redundant version of Al Green's old "Let's Stay Together" (Capitol). Martyn Ware produced, Heaven 17 plays back-up. The flip, "I Wrote the Letter," is also from her upcoming LP and *does* smoke. ■

Rob Patterson, Pete Tomlinson, Harold Bronson, Chris Stamey, Gene Simmons, Rod Serling, Adny Shernoff.

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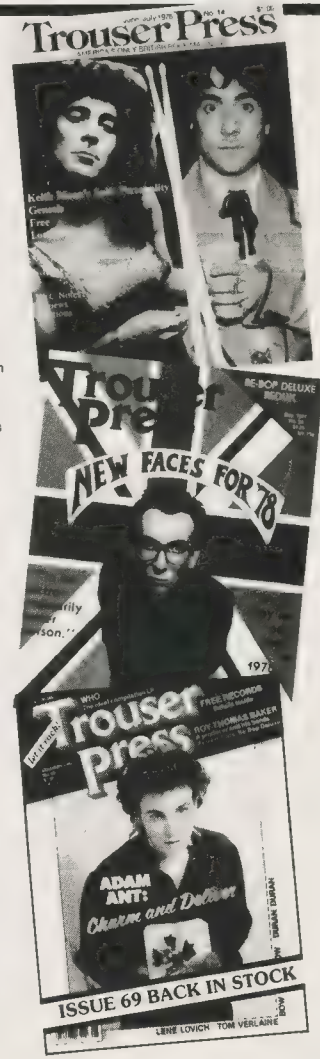

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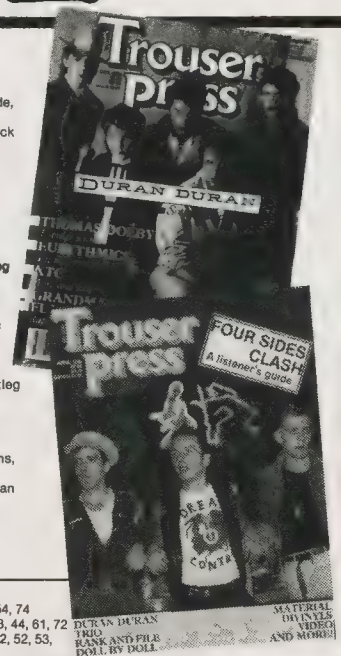

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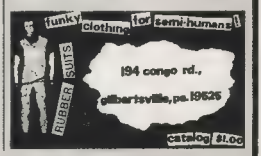

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COCTEAU TWINS

Danceteria New York City

Looking like TV personality Richard Masur with an enormous sea anemone perched atop his dome, Robin Guthrie (male half and guitarist of the Cocteau Twins) trudged across the stage at some ungodly hour and flipped on a Teac reel-to-reel deck. Pellucid-pupiled vocalist Elizabeth Frazer followed immediately in tasteful chiffon blouse and brown leather skirt. The two then stood about like junior scientists waiting for a sluggish papier mache volcano to kick into gear while a primordially simple rhythm went on for a rather long time.

Just at the moment it occurred to me I might be party to an "experiment" *à la* Public Image, the faint hum of taped guitar fanfare became audible. It built tentatively, and not a great deal. Then Guthrie began bending some live notes, and Frazer began to chant. From that point until the tape ran out, it was some enchanted evening.

The music was large parts pomp and bombast, but masterfully executed pomp and bombast. What sounded like a hundred treated guitars (via tape) effected a lush, Bruckner-*cum*-Banshee din. Songs were uniformly, confidently and hauntingly gorgeous, even when Frazer's beautiful voice got buried in the mix.

The Cocteau Twins' onstage demeanor was awkwardly—even misanthropically—shy. Frazer clapped along offbeat (charming) and mumbled humble thank-you's before the guitar roars died down She wore little makeup, Guthrie none at all. *There's* a change.

Detractors might say the Twins' is a formulaic etherealness. But I'd say, hell, anything you do with pop music is to some extent formulaic. And the Cocteau Twins are making some very humane and lovely music. **Don Howland**

Lisa Haun

SOLOMON BURKE

Club Bluenote Toronto

What do you do when you're an old soul singer with an illustrious past and a questionable future—too old to learn new tricks but too young to rest?

The standard route is to peddle nostalgia: Get a three-piece suit, a bar band, and hustle down the road trading remnants of glory for survival.

Not so Solomon Burke, whose title of "King" still suits his 400-pound-plus girth and pompous bearing (not to mention his status as a bishop in his own church). Within the accoutrements lies a soul singer of the highest order, an energetic showman with a fiery stage presence. Hard to believe he was once a mortician.

He opened with his signature, "Everybody Needs Somebody to Love"—one of several Burke tunes covered by the Stones when they were just out of school. Then he fell into the predictable cliché of singing "hit medleys," four or five numbers stretched out to 20-minute extravaganzas. He alternated fast sets ("Tonight's the Night," "Proud Mary," a mighty "Down in the Valley") with slow sets ("Just Out of Reach," "A Matter of Time"). Burke can evoke the sweet tone of Otis Redding on ballads, or the savagery of Wilson Pickett when the groove strikes him.

Ever the preacher, Burke worked the crowd relentlessly. He testified in long, soothing raps on life and love, teased stage-side couples, and asked "Are you with me?" time and again. He refused to quit before inspiring near-hysteria—and did.

That kind of action makes nostalgia negligible. Burke breathed not just life but fire into classic and forgotten singles. The audience, full of people half his age, was live and kicking.

Burke still conducts services in his church. But as anyone who caught his month-long stint at the Bluenote will tell you, that's not the only place he's holding revival meetings these days. In pulpit or roadhouse, the message is the same: Save That Soul.

Howard Druckman

STYLE COUNCIL

Apollo Victoria London

The anti-war benefit concert known as the Big One had a talent roster to live up to its name. The Style Council appeared between the brassy R&B of Ian Dury and Mari Wilson, and the rousing anthems of U2—and following two acts of skits and monologues, both of which ended with two-song solo sets by Elvis Costello.

Where Costello exuded purpose and confidence, however, Council-person Paul Weller stumbled from one song to the next, apparently wondering what he was doing there in the first place. He seemed more concerned with looking cool while getting rid of his chewing gum than establishing a rapport with the audience.

The "band"—Weller, keyboard cohort Mick Talbot and an overbearing backing tape—played mostly boppy pop like the acoustic-based "Headstart for Happiness." The closest Style Council got to an anthem was the funky "Money-Go-Round," attacking all of capitalism. If not exactly appropriate to the occasion, at least it was a protest.

Most of the songs weren't identified. Neither was the talented young back-up singer who delivered her vocals with twice as much conviction as Weller, and a dreadlocked rapper who made a valiant attempt at rousing the crowd while Weller slapped a bass.

But the person who finally reeled in Style Council needed no introduction: Costello stepped onstage during the finale of "My Ever Changing Moods" to bring it all home. For that short moment Weller and Talbot had purpose—if only to play back-up. Glancing at Costello, Weller sang like he meant it for the first time in the set.

Most of the audience, if they cared at all, forgave and forgot when U2 took the stage minutes later. And, to their credit, the Style Council did pull off a decent show. But perhaps Weller and Talbot should stick to ripping off Motown licks, and leave rabble-rousing to the heavyweights. **D.F. Wilson**

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